

# THE MILITANT

INSIDE

Behind recent plunge in  
stock, bond prices

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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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May 2, 1994

## Democratic forces score victory in South Africa

### Bantustan leader is forced to end election boycott

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The revolutionary democratic movement in South Africa scored a victory when Mangosuthu Buthelezi, leader of the Inkatha Freedom Party, announced he was ending his call to boycott the April 26-28 elections.

Buthelezi, who is also chief minister of the KwaZulu Bantustan, said Inkatha would field candidates in the election.

Inkatha thugs, armed and funded by sections of the South African government and police, have waged a campaign of violence and terror to undermine free political activity by working people in Natal province. More

*Beginning with our next issue, an international reporting team will provide 'Militant' readers eyewitness coverage from S. Africa*

than 230 people have died in Natal, which includes KwaZulu, since March 31, when South African president F.W. de Klerk established a state of emergency in the region and sent in 3,000 troops to quell the violence.

Buthelezi and King Goodwill Zwelithini, a traditional leader of Zululand, had held out with the hope of preserving their rule and wealth in KwaZulu. However, they underestimated the determination of working people throughout South Africa to wipe out the vestiges of white-minority rule. This fact was underlined when tens of thousands of workers and youth threw out the tyrant of the Bophuthatswana Bantustan, Lucas Mangope, in March. The military ruler of the Ciskei "homeland" was the next to flee



Nelson Mandela campaigning for the African National Congress election ticket. Announcement by Buthelezi that Inkatha Freedom Party will field candidates reflects growing isolation of opponents of democratic revolution.

in the face of a mutiny by his army. Strikes by civil service workers have swept the homelands over the past two months.

ANC president Nelson Mandela called the agreement between himself, Buthelezi, and de Klerk "a leap forward for peace, reconciliation, nation-building, and [an] inclusive election process." The deal will

grant ceremonial powers to Zwelithini and offers future mediation on regional rights. The ANC offered nothing new in negotiations.

Mandela told 15,000 ANC supporters gathered in Umlazi township outside Durban in Natal on April 16 that the ANC was

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## Support grows for striking Teamsters

BY JON HILLSON

MINNEAPOLIS — From the Fraser Surrey Docks in Vancouver, British Columbia, to the CSX rail terminal in Atlanta, labor solidarity with striking Teamsters temporarily stymied efforts of U.S. freight bosses to move struck goods by sea and train. The Teamsters union has been organizing round-the-clock picketing since the strike against 22 trucking firms began April 6. The 75,000 unionized

freight haulers, terminal dock and office workers, and mechanics are fighting management demands to be able to hire thousands of part-time workers at lower wages and benefits. The trucking bosses also seek to widen the wage gap between new full-time hires and current workers, while buying or opening nonunion subsidiaries to compete against Teamster-organized haulers.

When Teamsters, whose picket lines were

honored by members of the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union (ILWU), kept Sea-Land from unloading ships in Tacoma, Washington, the bosses sent two of the ships to Vancouver for cargo removal. Striking Teamsters followed on land, and on April 15 set up picket lines on the docks. The picket lines were honored by ILWU members in Canada and sailors on board the Sea-Land Trader, until Sea-Land bosses obtained a court injunction 12 hours later. The West Coast-based ILWU continues to honor Teamster pickets. "Sea-Land stayed with the Master Freight Agreement for years since they got to pay us three or four dollars an hour less than longshore wages," a Teamster striker explained. "Now the chickens have come home to roost." Sea-Land mechanics, members of the International Association of Machinists (IAM), have refused to cross the picket lines, as well. The Teamsters national daily "Freight Bulletin" announced April 12 that the East Coast-based "International Longshoremen's Association has agreed to honor our picket lines."

In Atlanta, bosses at ABF tried to ship struck freight by rail. Teamster strikers followed scab drivers to the CSX yard, as up to 20 unionists participated in picket duty. They were joined by CSX railroad workers, including members of the United Transportation Union (UTU) and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers. Nineteen of 25 rail workers stayed off duty, in solidarity with the Teamster action, according to striking

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Truck drivers on the picket line outside Roadway in Atlanta

Militant/Linda Joyce

## Bosnia war heats up after U.S. air strikes

BY PAT SMITH

Following the April 10 and 11 air strikes by U.S. fighter jets in Bosnia, rightist Serb forces intensified their shelling of Gorazde and won virtual control of the city. "We will make a Serbian municipality on the east bank of the Drina," rightist leader Radovan Karadzic boasted. "We can discuss the fate of the other part of the city in peace talks later." Gorazde, about 30 miles southeast of Sarajevo, is strategically located on a highway connecting Belgrade with the Adriatic coast.

Karadzic's troops seized anti-aircraft weapons from United Nations guards near Sarajevo and shelled UN buildings in Gorazde April 19. More than 300 people, including UN personnel, were killed and 1,075 wounded in the three-week offensive. Almost half the 65,000 residents of Gorazde have been left homeless. This city had been designated by the UN Security Council as one of six "safe areas" that could be protected by "all necessary means including the use of force." The rightist forces shot down a British Sea Harrier warplane on a bombing mission April 16.

In the wake of the virtual fall of Gorazde, Washington and its allies continue to debate their involvement in the first war in Europe in almost half a century. The U.S. air strikes and threats of more forceful military action risk a wider war in the Balkans and have not accomplished Washington's alleged intent of bringing rival regimes in the former Yugoslav republics to the negotiating table. "After Gorazde, I'm afraid we're not going to see a rush to the conference table, but rather more settling of scores on the battle-

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## U.S. forces shoot down own aircraft over Iraq

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Two U.S. F-15 fighter jets patrolling the air space over northern Iraq shot down two U.S. Black Hawk helicopters April 14, killing all 26 people on board.

This so-called friendly fire incident occurred in broad daylight with no warning being given to the targeted helicopters. Air traffic in the region was even being monitored by the U.S. Air Force, which was in contact with both the fighter jets and the helicopters. According to the Pentagon, the F-15 pilots were in compliance with the military's rules of engagement for firing on aircraft in the area.

"The loss of the Army helicopters wiped out the entire leadership of a Western military field operation" working in northern Iraq, stated an article in the April 16 *New York Times*. In addition to 15 U.S. soldiers, 3 Turkish citizens, 2 British officers, a French officer, and 5 Kurdish officials were killed.

"Clearly something went wrong," Gen. John Shalikashvili, chairman of the U.S. joint chiefs of staff, announced to the media. The *Wall Street Journal* described the inci-

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Will flogging à la Singapore solve crime problem? — page 11





## Workers protest in Indonesia

Some 30,000 workers from 21 manufacturing companies demonstrated April 14 in Medan, Indonesia. Protesters demanded a raise in the minimum wage to \$3.20 a day, an investigation into the death of a 22-year-old rubber worker, and union rights. The government currently recognizes only one trade union. A leader of the independent Indonesian Welfare Labor Union said police beat at least two workers to death at protests the following day.

## Tokyo's nuke plan alarms N. Korea

Hans Blix, director of the International Atomic Energy Agency, said the North Korean government has until early May to accept nuclear inspections or risk sanctions by the United Nations Security Council. Blix made the announcement while attending a meeting in Hiroshima supporting Japan's nuclear power industry. Tokyo is the only imperialist government developing fast-breeder reactors, which produce plutonium that can be used in nuclear weapons while generating electricity. Its first reactor of this kind began operation in early April.

The North Korean government has expressed concern over Tokyo's intentions to develop nuclear weapons. "Our nuclear arms, if developed, would be primarily designed to contain Japan," North Korean ambassador to India Cha Bong-Ju said. Meanwhile, South Korean officials said they would no longer press Pyongyang to exchange envoys as a precondition for further talks.

## Banking workers strike in India

A strike by 1.5 million bank and insurance industry workers virtually shut down India's financial sector April 8. Twenty unions called the walkout to protest the government's plan to open nationalized banks to private competition.

## Moscow, Kiev settle fleet dispute

Russian president Boris Yeltsin and President Leonid Kravchuk of Ukraine agreed on a division of the disputed Black Sea Fleet, avoiding threatened armed conflict. The accord gives 15-20 percent of the fleet's 300 ships to Ukraine and allows for separate naval bases. Prior to the agreement, Ukrainian troops seized control of a disputed Black Sea Fleet coastal outpost. Thirty-six



Hundreds of students demonstrate at the University of Pittsburgh April 5 to protest the administration's potential \$15 million investment in the Mt. Graham observatory in Arizona. Environmental groups argue that the construction of the project on a peak of the Pinaleno Mountains in the Coronado National Forest, 100 miles northeast of Tucson, threatens endangered species. The area is also considered sacred by the San Carlos Apaches. According to Josh Knauer of the Mt. Graham Coalition, an environmental organization, this was one of 70 protests around the world. Shortly after the student rally, campus officials announced the University of Pittsburgh was pulling out of the project.

hours earlier Russian officers defied Ukrainian authorities by ordering departure of a Russian naval research ship from Odessa, Ukraine. The sailing of the ship prompted a high-seas chase by Ukrainian forces.

## 'Shock therapy' for Turkey

Turkey's prime minister Tansu Ciller unveiled tough austerity measures that will cut as many as 40,000 jobs in nationalized coal mines, steel factories, textile mills, shipyards, and other industries. The "shock therapy" includes closing unprofitable state-owned businesses, mass layoffs, large-scale privatization, wage freezes, price hikes of up to 100 percent, and cuts in government

funding. The International Monetary Fund and World Bank pressed for the measures allegedly to help Ankara reduce its \$4.3 billion budget deficit.

## Italy rightists win legislative posts

Silvio Berlusconi, whose right-wing Freedom Alliance won Italy's elections, secured the Speaker's posts in both houses of Parliament for his handpicked candidates April 16, making it more likely that the media tycoon will be named prime minister. The Chamber of Deputies elected as speaker Irene Pivetti, a legislator of the Northern League, once of the three parties in the rightist alliance. The Senate elected Carlo Scognamiglio for the post, an economist with family ties to the owners of the Pirelli rubber corporation and Fiat automobile empires. Scognamiglio is a member of Forza Italia, Berlusconi's own party.

## Amsterdam tightens asylum laws

The Dutch government will now decide whether or not to allow refugees to apply for asylum within 24 hours of the immigrant's arrival. Anyone coming from a country Amsterdam considers "safe" will be turned back at the border. The governments of the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, and Luxembourg have agreed to ban immigrants whose asylum applications were rejected by one of the others.

## Loyalists charged in Belfast murder

Three members of an outlawed pro-British paramilitary group were charged April 13 with murdering a Protestant woman in Belfast. Two other men and a woman were arrested for aiding and abetting the April 6 killing of 31-year-old Margaret Wright. Police speculate the woman was mistaken for a Catholic at a local bar run by a pro-British group. The charges came the day after the outlawed Ulster Volunteer Force said it killed one of its own members, Ian Hamilton, who they say admitted murdering Wright. Pro-British rightists have been linked to seven of the 10 political deaths this year in Northern Ireland.

## Thousands strike in Trinidad

The National Trade Union Centre of Trinidad and Tobago, an umbrella labor union body, is organizing a two-day walkout, called Resistance II, April 22 and 23. The action is part of a series of protests against sales of state-owned enterprises, layoffs, and other economic policies of Prime Minister Patrick Manning. Almost 10,000 workers participated in Resistance I in mid-March. Unions are demanding, among other things, a halt to layoffs, increased taxation of international oil companies, and restructuring debt payments so money can be used for public spending. — PAT SMITH

## THE MILITANT

### On-the-scene coverage of South African elections

*'Militant' reporters will be in South Africa for the next three weeks covering the country's first-ever nonracial elections, a milestone in the unfolding democratic revolution. Don't miss a single issue!*



Militant reporter Greg Rosenberg (left) interviews resident of squatter camp in Natal in February.

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# Killing of Albanian soldiers jars Athens, Tirana relations

BY BOBBIS MISAILIDES

ATHENS, Greece — On April 10, a commando unit of the North Ipiros Liberation Front (NILF), a Greek ultrarightist group, carried out an armed attack in southern Albania killing two soldiers and wounding three others.

The killing of the Albanian soldiers, at a training center for recruits outside Gjirokaster, strained already tense relations between the regimes in the two neighboring countries.

Albanian government officials demanded Athens publicly denounce the murders and take swift action to arrest the culprits. Tirana recalled its ambassador from Greece for consultations, expelled the Greek consul in Gjirokaster, asked the United Nations Security Council to condemn the government of the Panhellenic Socialist Movement (PASOK), and called for a European Commission inquiry. Some Albanian officials claimed the attackers were dressed in Greek army uniforms. One stated that "the criminal act was the work of the Greek special forces."

Greek foreign minister Karolos Papoulias denied the claim that the attack was carried out by Greek soldiers. But Athens has so far refused to conduct an investigation or make any arrests. Greek government spokesperson Evangelos Venizelos called the armed action a "provocation."

Proposing a meeting with Alfred Serreqi, his Albanian counterpart, Papoulias said Athens wants "normal, cooperative relations with Albania," but not at the cost of discrimination against the ethnic Greek minority in southern Albania. Tirana accepted the proposal for talks.

The size of the Greek-speaking minority in southern Albania, which capitalist politicians in Greece call North Ipiros, is disputed. The official Greek estimate is 200,000, while the Albanian government figure is 100,000.

## Greece's expanding economic interests

Greek rulers have greatly extended their economic interests in Albania and their involvement in the internal affairs of the country since the disintegration of the former Stalinist regime of Enver Hoxha. "The Albanian government can not provoke the Greek side," stated Papoulias recently, "when it knows that the contribution of Greece to the economic reconstruction of Albania has been great and essential."

In recent years, the Greek-speaking minority in southern Albania has become a focal point of the Greek capitalists' expansionist visions in the Balkan region. Stalinist regimes in Tirana had for decades

curtailed the rights of this minority to use the Greek language and practice their culture or the Greek orthodox religion. Successive capitalist governments in Greece have taken advantage of this discrimination to whip up nationalist sentiments among working people.

According to the daily *Kathimerini*, Greek minister of public order S. Papathe-melis called on the Greek government after the recent incident "to use its military might if a single hair of one Greek is touched in North Ipiros." Some members of the opposition New Democracy party speak openly of the need to "maintain the Greekness" of southern Albania, which Greek troops briefly occupied during World War II.

Greek imperialism's designs to conquer southern Albania were dealt a deadly blow at the time when workers and farmers there carried out a revolution against military occupation by Italian and German troops and against

native capitalists and landlords. The Greek rulers never forgave Albanian working people, maintaining a state of war against that country until the late 1980s.

The Greek-speaking minority in southern Albania has declined as a result of massive emigration to Greece over the past three years.

At least half the estimated 200,000 undocumented Albanian immigrant workers in Greece claim Greek origins, entitling them to residence permits and eventual citizenship. But Albanian immigrant workers are offered the worst jobs, and face widespread discrimination and often physical attacks by police and rightist thugs in Greece.

Tensions between Tirana and Athens have



increased since last summer. Demonstrations erupted in Gjirokaster then, after the Albanian government expelled a Greek orthodox priest it accused of distributing nationalist propaganda. The Greek government used this as a pretext to expel 20,000 Albanian immigrants and tighten restrictions on those remaining.

## Attacks on Macedonians mount in Australia

BY DOUG COOPER

SYDNEY, Australia — Prime Minister Paul Keating's Labor Party government recognized the government of Macedonia February 15 on condition that consular offices to be set up not use the name Republic of Macedonia, display its flag, or use a "contentious" nameplate or symbols.

Despite these conditions, Greek foreign minister Karolos Papoulias said in Athens immediately following the decision, "The reaction of Australia's Greek community will convince the Australian government that its recognition of Macedonia was a mistake." His statement was an extension abroad of the Greek rulers' campaign at home to whip up nationalist sentiment against recognition of the former Yugoslav republic.

Athens imposed a trade embargo—enforced by the Green military—on Macedonia in February. Its aim is to pressure the former Yugoslav republic to change its name, flag, and constitution. Successive governments in Greece have claimed that the use of the name Macedonia implies territorial claims on the northern Greek province of the same name.

Since its initial decision, the Australian government has all but reversed itself and joined in the Greek government's nationalist, chauvinist, and prowar campaign against Macedonia. Canberra has made no moves to

permit the Macedonian government to actually set up a consulate.

There are 500,000 people of Greek origin and 75,000 of Macedonian origin here out of a population of 18 million. Many Macedonians who have emigrated to Australia come from northern Greece, where they face severe chauvinist restrictions on their language, religious, and political rights.

Since the recognition, firebombings and graffiti attacks on churches, small businesses, and homes have taken place in Melbourne, Canberra, and Sydney. The majority of the targets are Macedonian.

The attacks began in Melbourne February 20 when the St. Nikola Macedonian Orthodox church was completely gutted by an arson attack. On February 21 two molotov cocktails were thrown at St. Dimitria Macedonian Orthodox church. This followed an arson attack on Macedonian House—a community organization of Greek-Australians who come from the northern Greek province of Macedonia—located in a Melbourne suburb.

Only one politician, federal Labor Party MP [Member of Parliament] Colin Hollis, has spoken against placing conditions on the recognition of the Republic of Macedonia.

### Arson and graffiti attacks

On February 27 between 60,000 and 100,000 protesters, most of them of Greek origin, rallied in Melbourne to condemn the government's decision to recognize Macedonia. Marchers carried signs saying, "Macedonia is and always will be Greek," "Leave Greek land alone," and "PM Keating, we feel betrayed." Victoria state premier Jeff Kennett, of the Liberal Party, addressed the nationalist rally. He called Canberra's recognition the "final betrayal of the Greek community of Australia."

More arson and graffiti attacks occurred March 8 and 9 in Canberra. The attacks spread to Sydney beginning March 13. No one has taken credit or been arrested for any of the attacks. The big-business media has reported allegations by the police that right-

ist anti-immigrant groups are responsible.

A national delegation of Greek-Australian businessmen and others who support Athens's chauvinist campaign met March 10 with the prime minister and other cabinet members to demand that the government use the term "Slav-Macedonian" to refer to people from the former Yugoslav republic.

Keating informed a delegation of Macedonian community leaders March 14 that the government has adopted just such a policy for all departments and agencies and that the government-funded mass media would be strongly encouraged to do likewise.

The annual meeting of state and federal ethnic affairs ministers achieved bipartisan unity on the use of the pejorative "Slav-Macedonian" label.

Outraged Macedonian community leaders condemned the decision, pointing out that they have been known in Australia as Macedonian since the 1920s. "The violence and aggression directed against the Macedonian community have been rewarded by the government," one said. "Macedonians are known as Macedonians throughout the world except in Greece and now in Australia."

Workers who are Macedonian are disgusted by the arson and graffiti attacks regardless of who has carried them out. They are also deeply offended by the Australian government's decision to label them "Slav-Macedonians." Many workers originally from Greece support anti-Macedonian chauvinism. But some have expressed opposition to the pronationalist campaign centered in Melbourne. "It's not the people, it's the Greek government" that is responsible, said one worker at Weston's. "the [Greek] people in Melbourne don't realize that this fighting will only give America and Russia an excuse to split up the Balkans even more," said another.

Doug Cooper is a member of the National Union of Workers at the Weston Biscuit Co. in Sydney.

## U.S. fighter jets strike in Bosnia

Continued from front page

field," an unnamed U.S. diplomat told the *New York Times*.

On April 19, U.S. president Bill Clinton approved proposals by his advisers for wider use of U.S. air power in Bosnia, under the banner of NATO. Washington also hinted it will seek to tighten the economic embargo on Serbia at the same time that Moscow and members of the European Union are raising proposals to ease the sanctions.

### Moscow terms air raids 'excessive'

Yuli Vorontsov, Moscow's UN representative, warned that such a plan for further air strikes would lead to the United Nations "becoming involved in ground operations." Protesting the U.S. air raids, which he called "excessive," Russian foreign minister Andrei Kozyrev said he would not sign an accord to join NATO's Partnership for Peace program that could eventually lead to full membership in the alliance. Moscow wanted "a more serious and substantive agreement" with NATO, "adequate to the relations that must exist between NATO and a great country like Russia," he said. Such an agreement, he continued, would "rule out unilateral actions, particularly military ones" like the bombings in Bosnia.

Paris, with 4,000 troops in Bosnia, revived a plan to gradually lift economic sanctions against Serbia and called for an immediate conference in Geneva of U.S., Russian, and European Union representatives. French foreign minister Alain Juppé said repre-

sentatives of all the countries should work on "an equal footing" to carry out the plan.

In Britain, Labor Party spokesman Jack Cunningham blamed "indecision and vacillation on the part of politicians in NATO" for the rightist Serb offensive. "Bosnia is not worth one British life," argued Member of Parliament Terry Dicks. The conservative politician called for the withdrawal of British troops.

"Should U.N. Escalate, or Back Off?" *New York Times* writer Roger Cohen asked in the April 17 issue. The United Nations faces a "painful dilemma," Cohen wrote, "over whether to escalate NATO attacks to force the Serbs to the negotiating table or withdraw and end its mission in Bosnia." The *Times* editors opposed a UN or NATO withdrawal and backed a call by some U.S. senators to lift a UN imposed arms embargo "as a way to respond forcefully to the Serbs without risking American lives."

The *Wall Street Journal* expressed its lack of confidence in how Clinton is handling the situation in an April 19 editorial. "Clearly, a policy of on-today, off-tomorrow threats of air strikes, and then three ineffectual sorties, won't do much to deter the Serbs (or the Somalis, or anyone for that matter). After the past weekend, you might say that the U.S., U.N. and NATO credibility are now down to about zero." *Journal* editors advocated forceful military action against the regime in Belgrade. "Stop pretending to be a noncombatant, which is a silly pose," they wrote, "and start acting like a combatant."

FROM PATHFINDER

## The Truth about Yugoslavia

Why working people should oppose intervention

GEORGE FYSON, ARGIRIS MALAPANIS, and JONATHAN SILBERMAN

The carnage in Yugoslavia is the product of the crisis of the depression-ridden world capitalist system. Rival gangs of would-be capitalists—fragments of the former Yugoslav Stalinist regime—are fighting a war for territory and resources. Far from displaying any humanitarian concern, the U.S. and European powers are intervening militarily to advance their competing interests. \$8.95

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## Students snap up 'Militant'

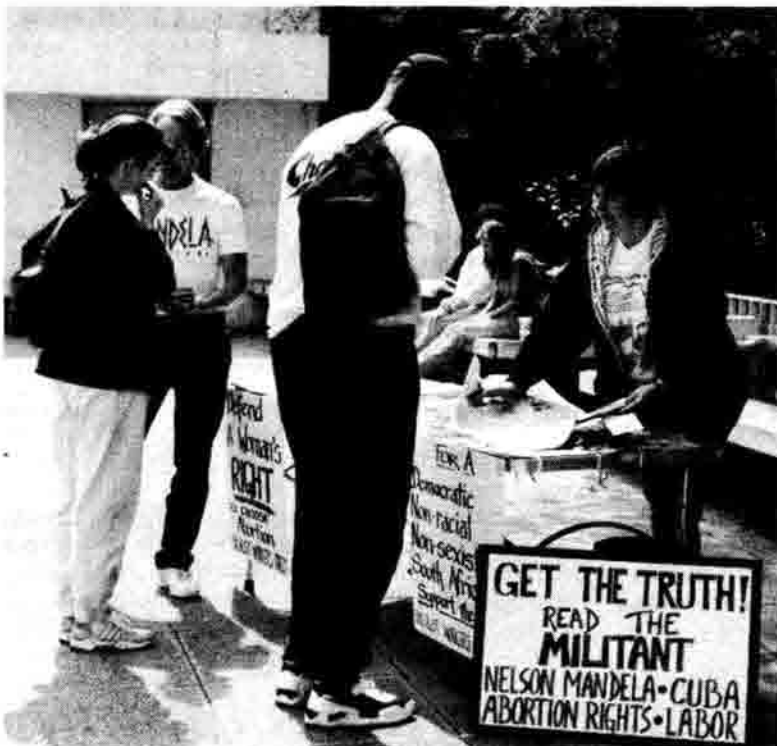
BY PAT SMITH

A young socialist and student at the University of Houston helped sell three subscriptions to the *Militant*, two subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, and two *New Internationalists* to students on his campus. Supporters of the campaign to win new readers to the socialist publications in Texas are using the international target week to build on this success by organizing one- and two-day sales teams to college campuses in the region.

Jerry Freiwirth in Houston reports a similar response at the University of Texas, Austin, campus. Young people there bought five copies of *New Internationalists*, four subscriptions to the *Militant*, and two to *Perspectiva Mundial*.

A school administrator who asked the salespeople to leave the university grounds was challenged by students interested in the socialist literature. A woman who had just purchased the Pathfinder book *Nelson Mandela Speaks* from the sales team told the official, "You should be ashamed of yourself. You can't get books like this anywhere on campus. Whatever happened to free speech?" The discussion continued and the team remained on campus.

Patrick Brown wrote from Christchurch, New Zealand, that distributors there began the April 16-24 target week by selling seven copies of *New Internationalists* and one subscription to the *Militant* to participants at a socialist educational weekend held at the Pathfinder bookstore. A number of students who had never been to a program at the bookstore before came to join in discussions on defense of the Cuban and South African revolutions, building a movement of socialist youth, and women's rights. One of the young people there heard about the confer-



Militant/Linda Joyce

Selling the *Militant* at Georgia State University in Atlanta

ence at her high school. Others learned about the event from *Militant* salespeople attending a meeting on "Cuba Today" featuring the Cuban consul-general in Australia, Marcelino Fajardo.

Peter Thierjung, an auto worker in Cleveland, traveled to Peoria, Illinois, with *Militant* salespeople from Chicago, Minneapolis, and Des Moines, Iowa. United Auto Workers members at the Caterpillar plant there bought 34 single copies and one subscription to the *Militant* at their plant gate. The sales team knocked on doors in working-class neighborhoods there and set up a literature table at Bradley University to sell two more *Militant* subscriptions in the first two days of

the week-long trip.

Salespeople have been introducing the *Militant* to striking Teamsters and their supporters on picket lines, campuses, plant gates, and working-class neighborhoods. Pickets in Miami and Minneapolis took advantage of the special offer of \$13 for a 12-week subscription to the paper and a copy of *The Eastern Airlines Strike*. The book offers valuable lessons to fighting workers of the accomplishment of rank-and-file Machinists in their 686-day strike against Eastern. Two strikers in Brooklyn bought *Militant* subscriptions as well.

Next week's column will report the results of the target week. Meanwhile, keep the subs coming in!

## U.S. jets down aircraft over Iraq

Continued from front page

dent as one that "stunned Pentagon officials and damaged the image of the U.S. military."

Military and defense department officials offered excuses ranging from inoperable equipment to the high operating speeds of the "modern technology" the pilots are asked to control.

The U.S. fighter jets were supposedly enforcing a no-fly zone over northern Iraq imposed by Washington, London, and Paris in 1991 at the end of the Gulf War. Under this military order, the Iraqi government is prohibited from flying planes over its own airspace north of the 36th parallel. Washington claims this action is to protect Kurds living in the area. In August 1992 a similar violation of Iraqi airspace was declared over southern Iraq below the 32nd parallel.

The military operation over northern Iraq is organized out of the NATO base at Incirlik in southern Turkey, where about 75 U.S., British, French, and Turkish fighter aircraft are stationed. They fly about 50 sorties a day. According to Gen. Shalikashvili, who served as the operation's first commander in the spring of 1991, more than 27,000 jet patrols and 1,400 helicopter surveillance flights have been conducted by Washington and its allies over northern Iraq.

The U.S. rulers have used the no-fly zone to maintain their aggression against Iraq. One of U.S. president Bill Clinton's first acts as he took office Jan. 20, 1993 was to support a series of major bombing raids on Baghdad begun just days

earlier by then-president George Bush. Since then, the U.S. rulers have bombed Iraqi targets dozens of times. In July 1993, for example, navy and air force pilots fired missiles at Iraqi positions. They later admitted that they were mistaken in their belief that the Iraqis were preparing to shoot.

The first Associated Press news story on the latest incident quoted Hoyshar Zobari, a Kurdish official who was visiting Washington, D.C., as saying that Iraqi fighter jets had shot down the two U.S. helicopters. But U.S. government officials quickly backtracked from this charge, admitting that its own aircraft had done the shooting.

"It remained a mystery why the pilots would act so quickly to open fire," commented a *New York Times* article. "No Iraqi helicopters have ventured into the area since the flight ban was established and the helicopters were not acting in a threatening manner."

Defense Secretary William Perry ordered U.S. warplanes to continue patrolling the no-fly zone but to be less aggressive in enforcing the ban.

Clinton said the shooting would not lead Washington to back off enforcing the no-fly zone, which he called a "mission of mercy."

### Disagreements over embargo

Reflecting some misgivings within the U.S. ruling class over current U.S. policy toward Iraq, the *New York Times* editors in mid-April urged "reconsideration of U.S. objectives" there. They described Washington's air operations over Iraq as being "no longer linked

to any coherent policy goals."

An early April discussion in the United Nations Security Council revealed growing disagreements over whether to continue the three-and-a-half-year-old economic embargo against Iraq. The council, under U.S. urging, was set to issue its routine statement that Baghdad hadn't yet met preconditions for lifting the embargo. However, representatives of France, Russia, China, and several other members tried to insert a sentence commending the Iraqi government for its recent cooperation. Washington strongly objected so no official UN statement was issued.

The French government is eager to see the sanctions lifted so that oil ties can be reestablished with Baghdad. The Turkish rulers complain that the embargo is costing them billions of dollars in lost trade. Moscow wants the Iraqi government to be able to repay its old debts to them.

But the embargo is still in place and continues to place the heaviest toll on working people in Iraq. Food and medicine, despite being officially exempt from the embargo, are in dangerously short supply. Prices have skyrocketed. An egg that cost the equivalent of 5 cents in 1989 now costs \$15.

A report by the Iraqi Ministry of Health earlier this year said that 390,000 Iraqi civilians had died as a result of the embargo, most of them children. In addition, more than 42,000 children suffer from malnutrition and more than 2 million have illnesses related to malnutrition.

## WHERE WE STAND end of week six

48% SOLD 1,432 60% SHOULD BE 1,800

	THE MILITANT			Perspectiva Mundial			NEW INTERNATIONAL		
	SOLD	GOAL	%	SOLD	GOAL	%	SOLD	GOAL	%
ICELAND	9	12	75%	0	1	0%	0	6	0%
NEW ZEALAND									
Auckland	59	85	69%	3	6	50%	9	40	22%
Christchurch	28	45	62%	1	2	50%	10	20	50%
N.Z. total	87	130	67%	4	8	50%	19	60	32%
AUSTRALIA	16	25	64%	4	8	50%	15	27	56%
SWEDEN	25	40	63%	11	18	61%	11	30	37%
GREECE	6	10	60%	0	1	0%	2	5	40%
BRITAIN									
Manchester	39	50	78%	0	5	0%	10	30	33%
London	34	60	57%	0	2	0%	15	40	38%
Sheffield	12	35	34%	0	2	0%	3	20	15%
Britain Total	85	145	59%	0	9	0%	28	90	31%
UNITED STATES									
Albany, NY	4	5	80%	1	1	100%	0	4	0%
Houston	45	65	69%	7	12	58%	20	27	74%
Greensboro, NC	34	50	68%	0	5	0%	8	22	36%
Detroit	58	90	64%	4	10	40%	22	40	55%
Albuquerque, NM	3	5	60%	2	1	200%	1	3	33%
Miami	72	120	60%	20	50	40%	66	95	69%
San Francisco	79	135	59%	18	32	56%	71	105	67%
Salt Lake City, UT	51	90	57%	2	15	13%	1	55	2%
Los Angeles	103	200	52%	47	95	49%	33	90	37%
Atlanta	41	80	51%	11	13	85%	24	35	69%
Washington, D.C.	38	75	51%	16	25	64%	21	35	60%
Boston	60	120	50%	23	40	58%	26	80	33%
Twin Cities, MN	51	110	46%	7	17	41%	38	65	58%
Des Moines, IA	36	80	45%	14	35	40%	22	55	40%
Seattle	32	75	43%	5	12	42%	23	35	66%
Chicago	54	130	42%	13	30	43%	57	75	76%
Denver	4	10	40%	1	2	50%	3	3	100%
New Haven, CT	6	15	40%	1	3	33%	3	10	30%
St. Louis	28	70	40%	3	8	38%	17	35	49%
Birmingham, AL	28	75	37%	1	5	20%	9	35	26%
Brooklyn	47	130	36%	14	35	40%	51	110	46%
New York	48	135	36%	10	35	29%	60	110	55%
Philadelphia	38	115	33%	5	30	17%	37	65	57%
Newark, NJ	42	130	32%	5	35	14%	34	75	45%
Pittsburgh	32	100	32%	7	10	70%	6	40	15%
Cleveland	26	85	31%	4	10	40%	15	30	50%
Cincinnati, OH	4	15	27%	3	2	150%	4	8	50%
Edinboro, PA	2	10	20%	1	0	0%	0	3	0%
Morgantown, WV	10	50	20%	0	2	0%	13	30	43%
Portland, OR	0	6	0%	0	0	0%	0	2	0%
U.S. Total	1,076	2,376	45%	245	570	43%	685	1,377	50%
CANADA									
Vancouver	53	75	71%	8	10	80%	17	45	38%
Toronto	43	80	54%	11	15	73%	3	40	8%
Montreal	26	75	35%	15	20	75%	35	70	50%
Canada Total	122	230	53%	34	45	76%	55	155	35%
BELGIUM	1	3	33%	2	4	50%	2	5	40%
GERMANY	3	10	30%	0	4	0%	11	25	44%
FRANCE	2	10	20%	4	2	200%	2	12	17%
PUERTO RICO	0	2	0%	5	8	63%	6	12	50%
TOTAL	1,432	2,993	48%	309	678	46%	836	1,804	46%
SHOULD BE	1,800	3,000	60%	390	650	60%	1,080	1,800	60%

### IN THE UNIONS

NEW ZEALAND									
UFBGWU	5	6	83%	0	—	—	1	1	100%
EU	6	9	67%	1	—	—	0	2	0%
MWU	1	4	25%	0	2	—	0	2	0%
N.Z. Total	11	15	73%	1	—	—	1	3	33%
CANADA									
CAW	6	9	67%	4	5	80%	4	4	100%
IAM	11	19	58%	3	2	150%	1	6	17%
ACTWU	2	4	50%	1	2	50%	0	2	0%
USWA	2	11	18%	1	2	50%	2	10	20%
Canada Total	21	43	49%	9	11	82%	7	22	32%
UNITED STATES									
ILGWU	8	12	67%	8	24	33%	1	8	13%
UTU	37	72	51%	1	3	33%	1	22	5%
IAM	38	80	48%	2	15	13%	2	25	8%
ACTWU	8	23	34%	5	8	63%	3	10	30%
OCAW	24	70	34%	0	5	0%	5	25	20%
UAW	43	125	34%	6	10	60%	10	30	33%
UFCW	12	35	34%	11	20	55%	2	15	13%
USWA	22	70	31%	1	8	13%	4	21	19%
UMWA	5	20	25%	0	—	—	0	—	0%
U.S. Total	197	507	39%	34	93	37%	28	156	18%
SWEDEN									
Food workers	1	3	33%	1	—	—	1	2	50%
Metal workers	0	1	0%	0	2	0%	0	2	0%
Transport workers	0	2	0%	0	—	—	0	1	0%
Sweden Total	1	6	17%	1	—	—	1	5	20%
AUSTRALIA									
AMEU	0	4	0%	0	—	—	1	3	33%
FPU	0	2	0%	0	—	—	0	2	0%
NUW	0	2	0%	0	—	—	0	1	0%
Australia Total	0	8	0%	0	—	—	1	6	17%
BRITAIN									
TGWU	3	7	43%	0	—	—	0	—	0%
AEEU	1	—	—	0	—	—	0	—	0%
NUM	1	—	—	0	—	—	0	—	0%
RMT	15	—	—	1	—	—	1	—	100%
Britain Total	19	—	—	0	—	—	0	—	0%

ACTWU — Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union; AEEU — Amalgamated Engineering and Electrical Workers Union; AFMEU — Automotive, Food, Metals and Engineering Union; CAW — Canadian Auto Workers; EU — Engineers Union; FPU — Food Preservers' Union; IAM — International Association of Machinists; ILGWU — International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union; MWU — Meat Workers Union; NUM — National Union of Mineworkers; NUW — National Union of Workers; OCAW — Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers; RMT — Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers; TGWU — Transport and General Workers Union; UAW — United Auto Workers; UFBGWU — United Food, Beverage and General Workers Union; UFCW — United Food and Commercial Workers; UMWA — United Mine Workers of America; USWA — United Steelworkers of America; UTU — United Transportation Union



# Letters call for parole of framed-up unionist

Mark Curtis is a union and political activist who has served more than five years in Iowa state prisons on frame-up charges of rape and burglary.

The Mark Curtis Defense Committee has launched a campaign to urge the Iowa State Board of Parole to grant Curtis a hearing and release him. About 175 people from around the world have written to the parole board on Curtis's behalf so far. Below are excerpts from a few of these letters.

## Janice Davies Manchester, England

On behalf of the Innocent campaign group in Manchester, England, we are writing to urge you to call a meeting of the Parole Board and grant the release of Mark Curtis. The group is made up of the family and friends of those wrongfully convicted of crime. As campaigners against miscarriages of justice and wrongful imprisonments here, we have been provided with the facts in Mark Curtis' case and understand that even by your own criteria he should now be a free man.

We believe Mark Curtis to be innocent of the charges brought against him. We find the circumstances in which he was arrested, charged, tried, and jailed to have been abso-

lutely unjust, and all too similar to some of the cases we have had to deal with here in Britain where people have suffered wrongful incarceration and been left to rot in prison. Even if you do not share this opinion, by your own requirements under Iowa law, he should no longer be in prison. Mark Curtis has served out the time on the sexual abuse charge, has an excellent record in prison, a home, job offers, and large community support.

We in the Manchester Innocent group demand PAROLE NOW FOR MARK CURTIS!

Janice Davies is a representative of Manchester Innocent.

## Jackie Vaughn Lansing, Michigan

I am taking this opportunity to again request consideration for the parole petition of Mr. Mark Curtis. He resides at the Bennett Correctional Center in Fort Madison, Iowa. Mr. Curtis' case has generated much public support and it is my hope that he will receive a hearing so that his petition can be evaluated.

Mr. Curtis maintains his innocence of all allegations and has a current appeal pending against his conviction. He has established a



Display on Mark Curtis fight at January 1994 international solidarity conference in Cuba. His supporters are campaigning for parole for the framed-up union activist.

good citizenship and conduct record while serving his sentences. Mr. Curtis has completed a sentence on sexual assault and now remains incarcerated for a charge of burglary. This charge was added several months after his arrest.

I ask that you keep these facts in mind when deciding his eligibility for parole. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Jackie Vaughn is the associate president pro

tempore of the Michigan Senate and chairperson of the Martin Luther King Jr. Commission.

## David Yard Virden, Illinois

I am writing in regard to Mark Curtis and to urge you to grant him a parole hearing. Your psychiatrists say that it is not necessary for Mr. Curtis to be transferred to Oakdale, but you still contend that he should be sent there. In spite of the length of time he has served, an exemplary prison record, and widespread support, you continue to hold him. Additional evaluations and rehabilitation would seem to be absurd at this point in time. Society and justice can be best served by Mr. Curtis' release, and he certainly deserves it. Please reconsider and give the man his freedom.

David Yard is the Mine Committee Chairman for United Mine Workers of America Local 1969.

## Michael Brown Atlanta, Georgia

I am writing to strongly urge you to grant Mark Curtis a hearing before the Parole Board, and to grant him an immediate parole. Mark meets all the requirements for parole under Iowa state law. You need not be convinced, as I am, of Curtis' innocence. His prison record shows no problems. He has served the required time for the sexual abuse charge. Curtis has a strong network of family, friends and community support to enable him to make a smooth transition from prison life. He also has a number of job offers.

Although I am a shop steward for the International Association of Machinists not a personnel director, I would certainly do everything I could to help Curtis find employment or provide any other assistance he and his wife might need. A strong union man like Curtis would be most welcome at Northwest, and I suspect by most workers.

Since Curtis meets all the legal requirements for parole, not to grant him a hearing and immediate parole would only strengthen my suspicion that Curtis remains in jail for political, not criminal reasons.

Michael Brown is a shop steward for International Association of Machinists Local 2665.

## Claire Culhane Vancouver, British Columbia

We join with countless other individuals and organizations, across Canada and the United States, who are urging your Board to reconsider the recent decision denying Mr. Mark Curtis his release at this time.

As one of many other men and women held in both Canadian and American prisons who have since been proven to have been wrongly convicted, and by every existing standard, Mark Curtis has long since earned the right to be released.

We look forward to your favorable response at the earliest possible date.

Thank you for sharing our concern.

Claire Culhane is a representative of the Prisoners' Rights Group.

# New International Fund will help to reissue Marxist magazine in French

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The first \$2,500 towards the \$100,000 New International Fund has arrived in New York. Supporters of the fund throughout the world are busy making plans to raise the rest of the money by the June 28 deadline.

The fund will make possible production of a series of new issues of the magazine and its sister publications in French, Spanish, and Swedish.

New International no. 9 entitled "The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution," is already off the presses and is being circulated internationally. Subsequent issues in all four languages will take up the evolution of the world capitalist crisis since the 1987 stock market crash, the disintegration of the Stalinist apparatus in the former Soviet Union, and the rise of rightist currents in bourgeois politics in the imperialist countries.

New International is a Marxist magazine. As the introduction to the first issue stated in 1983, it is "designed for discussion and practical use by working-class fighters and their allies among the oppressed and exploited." The magazine strives to apply to today's world the lessons and conquests of the communist movement over the last century and a half.

Issues published in the last decade include articles on the character of the revo-

lution unfolding in South Africa today; the aristocracy of labor and social roots of opportunism; and the 50-year disruption operation by the FBI, CIA, and other U.S. government agencies against the Socialist Workers Party, the labor movement, Black rights organizations, and others.

## Philadelphia fund supporters raise goal

Jon Teitelbaum writes from Philadelphia, "It gives me great pleasure to inform you that we have rejected the \$4,750 goal for the fund drive in favor of a higher goal of \$7,500."

The response of Philadelphia-area supporters of the magazine is just one example of the kind of broad appeal the fund will have among fighting workers, small farmers, and youth.

The editor of the French-language *Nouvelle Internationale*, Michel Prairie, reports that the third issue of the magazine, featuring the article "The Second Assassination of Maurice Bishop," will soon be reissued with an attractive three-color cover.

This article takes up the accomplishments and lessons of the Grenadian revolution. In March 1979, workers and farmers in Grenada threw out the U.S.-backed dictatorship of Eric Gairy. The new government, headed by Maurice Bishop, began to organize working people to ad-



Reissue of *Nouvelle Internationale* no. 3 will feature new three-color cover.

vance their class interests against big landowners and capitalists.

The article explains why the political legacy of that revolution remains important for revolutionary fighters around the world, despite the October 1983 coup by a Stalinist faction led by Deputy Prime Minister Bernard Coard. The coup leaders murdered Bishop and other revolutionaries, overthrew the workers and farmers government, and opened the way for Washington's subsequent invasion of the island.

*Nouvelle Internationale* no. 3 also includes two interviews with Bishop, probably the only such documents available in French, and two speeches by Cuban president Fidel Castro on the political campaign known as the rectification process, launched by Cuban communists in the mid-1980s.

In addition, the magazine includes a speech by Thomas Sankara, "The Revolution is a Perpetual Teacher," explaining the perspective of the revolutionary government he headed in the West African country of Burkina Faso between 1983 and 1987.

A chart outlining progress on the fund will appear in next week's *Militant*. Keep those checks and pledges coming in!

## CONTRIBUTE TO \$100,000 FUND FOR MARXIST MAGAZINE

*New International*, a magazine of Marxist politics and theory, has launched a \$100,000 fund to print a series of new issues of the journal, which will appear in English, Spanish, French, and Swedish.

The successful completion of this fund, which ends June 28, will enable these important publications to reach thousands of working-class fighters around the globe.

### Make your payment or pledge today!

I pledge ☐ Enclosed is ☐ (check one)  
☐ \$500 ☐ \$250 ☐ \$100 ☐ \$50 ☐ other

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COUNTRY \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION (for identification only) \_\_\_\_\_

Write check to NEW INTERNATIONAL FUND and send to 410 West St., New York, N.Y. 10014.



# Cuban youth meets workers in Illinois . . .

BY LUIS MADRID

DECATUR, Illinois — "Your cause is the cause of millions of workers, and for that reason you are not alone," said Pável Díaz Hernández to a standing ovation from more than 250 trade unionists gathered at the hall of the United Paperworkers International Union/ Allied Industrial Workers (UPIU/AIW). Since June 27, 1993, the 760 members of UPIU/AIW Local 7837 have fought against a lockout by A.E. Staley Manufacturing Co. The company shut the gates of the huge corn processing plant to workers after they resisted the imposition of a concession contract by management.

After visiting their picket line and sharing experiences with some of their leaders, Cuban youth leader Díaz was invited to address the gathering. The April 5 meeting was the now regular "Solidarity Meeting" that members of Local 7837 hold on Tuesdays to report on and discuss developments around their fight.

"What I have seen here with you," Díaz told the trade unionists, "is something workers around the world should know. I have learned a lot in these few hours, talking with the pickets, with the Road Warriors, these oppressed workers, slaves of the twentieth century." However, he added, these are "the same slaves who in South Africa broke their chains against the racists."

In the same way the media ignores the reality facing workers in Decatur, Díaz stated, "they have made it their business to try and silence, harass, and defeat Cuba and its revolution. Simply because it is a workers revolution." Pointing to the nearly 80,000 workers assemblies held in Cuba in the course of several months to discuss that country's problems and propose solutions, Díaz said, "This is the image that the ruling class needs to hide." But the reality of the Cuban revolution, he added, "is as powerful as the sun, like your fight, and the employers will not be able to cover it up with a finger."

## Road Warriors

Díaz's visit to Decatur was arranged by Frank Travis and Fred Hicks, who are two of nearly 30 Road Warriors — members of Local 7837 who travel around the country winning solidarity for their fight against Staley. In the course of the day, Díaz and the two trade unionists shared experiences on a broad range of issues.

"Because of the fight," Travis told Díaz, "I have traveled. And I have learned more about other people fighting, things you will not know about unless you leave this town. And every time I come back I look at our fight different."

"Since the fight we have learned more than ever before," Hicks added.

Díaz spoke about his experiences as a volunteer among thousands of Cuban soldiers during the 1988 war in Angola against invading South African armed forces. He drew an analogy with the workers' fight, telling the two unionists, "Justice can be more powerful than the most sophisticated weaponry. You can delay its success, but you cannot prevent it." Cuba's efforts in helping to defeat the South African army was "our grain of sand toward the victory over apartheid," Díaz said. And "while they try to portray our going to Angola as similar to Vietnam, our victory against apartheid's

army makes it difficult for their lies to stick."

"We lost it," interjected Travis, talking about the United States war in Vietnam. "I went because they told me I should stop the spread of communism," he continued. "But everyone there found out that was not true. They were trying to get me killed for money."

## Campus meetings

Díaz was invited to visit Decatur by these unionists after he met Travis and Hicks in Chicago during a speaking tour of college campuses there. His stop in Illinois was part of a two-month tour of more than a dozen U.S. cities. This segment was cosponsored by the local Chicago Cuba Coalition, and faculty and student groups in the area. Through the talks and the corresponding question-and-answer periods, the Cuban youth leader explained the gains of the revolution as well as some of the measures the Cuban government has been forced to adopt, such as legalization of the use of dollars and self-employment, to deal with a severe economic crisis.

"Working people in Cuba are aware that capitalism has very little to show for itself in Latin America," Díaz said at a meeting at Lake Forest College, north of Chicago, which drew nearly 50 people. Some 35,000 children die every day of preventable diseases in that part of the world, he stated. "That is 25 children per minute, at a time when, in spite of our limitations, in Cuba we were able to bring the infant mortality rate down to 9.4 per 1,000 live births." Referring to the more than three decades of an embargo imposed by Washington, and its effects on the revolution, the Cuban youth said, "We cannot wait for the blockade to be lifted for us to try to solve our problems." Díaz addressed similar themes before audiences at Malcolm X College in Chicago and North Central College in Naperville, Illinois. All told, he spoke to some 120 people through these campus meetings.

## 'How the working man lives'

Another aspect of Díaz's visit to Decatur was his stop at the Staley workers' picket area. "So, you came to see how the working man in the United States lives?" a locked-out worker asked the Cuban youth leader as he entered the picket shack across the street from the plant. Quickly, the Staley workers



Militant/Luis Madrid  
Pável Díaz (left) meets with locked-out Staley workers at their union hall in Decatur, Illinois. Unionists Fred Hicks and Frank Travis (third and fourth from left) organized his visit with the embattled workers at the corn processing plant.

provided Díaz information about their fight and an update on their situation — their unemployment benefits had ran out two weeks earlier and they were now receiving only \$60 a week in strike benefits. A maintenance worker who had worked for nearly three decades for Staley prior to the lock-out told Díaz he had seen the company reduce the workforce from "2,650 in 1965 to 760 in 1993. Instead of one, you would be expected to do four or five different jobs," he said.

In October 1992, the company imposed a concession contract on the workers. Management's terms included abolishing seniority rights, combining and assigning jobs at the supervisors' discretion, and forcing workers to work 12-hour rotating shifts with no overtime pay. Union members responded with an in-plant strategy that included a work-to-rule policy and a fight to enforce safety regulations. They also organized solidarity rallies of thousands. The company then locked them out.

Regarding production in the last few months, the company "had broken some records," the maintenance work said. "But it was the workers who had to pay with their safety and health. You had to work from 80 to 90 hours a week."

"And they keep trying to tell us that we

should go this route," Díaz responded, explaining why Cuban working people reject going back to capitalism. "The revulsion one feels is great," he said. "It is simply slavery of a new type."

The Cuban youth was also able to visit the Staley workers' "Command Center," from where they coordinate their fight. In addition, he stopped at the offices of United Auto Workers Local 751 — whose members at Caterpillar, Inc., have engaged the company in a fight for a contract for the last two years.

In Cuba, "we have a lot of information about the Third World," Díaz said. "But through my trip I have seen more of what capitalism in the developed world is really all about." The Cuban youth's visit, Travis responded, allowed him to understand why "the U.S. government would prevent us from meeting each other."

As they all embraced to say good-bye, Díaz let it be known that this was the beginning of a new journey for him. "Wherever I go, I will talk about your struggle," he told his newfound cofighters. "Count on me as another Road Warrior."

Luis Madrid is a member of the United Transportation Union Local 577 and the Chicago Cuba Coalition.

# . . . and students in Ohio, Pennsylvania

BY EILENAH MOON

CLEVELAND — While addressing more than 200 people on campuses in the area April 6 and 7, Pável Díaz spoke about the determination of most Cuban people to defend their sovereignty and socialism. He spoke to students and faculty at Hiram College, Oberlin College, and Cuyahoga Community College.

When one student at Hiram College asked what would be necessary to mend relations between the governments of the United States and Cuba, Díaz replied, "It doesn't matter what conditions are asked. Even when Cuba meets all the conditions, nothing is done. When Reagan was president, he wanted three things from Cuba before he would lift the blockade. First, the end of the trade agreement between the Soviet Union

and Cuba. Second, that Cuba would end its support of the Sandinistas [in Nicaragua]. And third, Cuba would have to remove its troops from Angola. Today, all of these things have happened, but we do not have normal relations with the United States."

"Roosevelt said that Cuba was America's backyard," Díaz said, "and as long as the U.S. government considers Cuba its backyard, it will believe it has a right to interfere if it needs to."

Díaz said some of the problems facing Cuba today stem from mistakes Cuban revolutionaries made themselves. One such error, he stated, was abandoning the fight begun in the early years of the revolution to diversify agriculture and become less dependent on food imports.

Most Cuban revolutionaries believed that they could depend forever on trade relations Cuba developed with the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, he said.

"If you were to visit a Cuban home before this trade relationship collapsed," he said, "they would have probably served you what is considered Cuba's national dish — rice, beans, and pork. It was the irony of this situation that the 'national dish' would be made of rice that was imported from Russia or China, beans from Russia, and pork that may have been raised in the backyard, but was probably imported from Uruguay or Bolivia."

"But many young people and workers began once again to discuss the ideas of Che Guevara on building a nation that was more and more self-sufficient in its agriculture and industry," Díaz stated.

BY JOHN COX

PITTSBURGH — "The Cuban revolution can't be reduced to two or three of its accomplishments, like the advances we've

made in health care or education," Pável Díaz said to an audience of 55 people at the University of Pittsburgh on April 11. "The revolution also allowed us for the first time in our history to be a sovereign and independent nation. And more importantly, the revolution has instilled values of human solidarity. This is what brought me to Angola," the young revolutionary added. Díaz was one of more than 300,000 Cubans who volunteered to fight against the South African invasion of Angola in the 1970s and 80s.

Díaz's appearance at the University of Pittsburgh event was the high point of his four days here. The meeting was sponsored by a dozen campus groups and academic departments, and opened with the reading of a letter welcoming Díaz from the president of the Pittsburgh city council.

Díaz, who is a researcher at the Center of Studies for Youth in Havana and a leader of the Union of Young Communists, described the difficult economic conditions facing the Cuban people today. He gave a picture of the debates taking place throughout society. "Cubans speak out, and they speak about everything. We like to criticize, but from the inside, at the same time that we're working and sweating," he noted.

Díaz spoke to some 200 people at campuses in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, and did two press interviews. He also visited the picket lines of Allegheny Ludlum, a major steel manufacturer that is being struck by the United Steelworkers of America. Some of the striking workers were particularly interested in Díaz's explanation of the workers assemblies in Cuba.

The Students for a Free South Africa, a recently formed group at the University of Pittsburgh, organized a forum entitled "Cuba and Africa." Díaz, the featured speaker, recounted some of his experiences in Angola.

# GRANMA

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# U.S. embargo saps Cuba's health care

(The following article is reprinted from the March 9, 1994, issue of *Granma International* published in Havana, Cuba.)

BY NICANOR LEÓN COTAYO

ONE OF the main objectives of the U.S. blockade against Cuba has been to obstruct the public health system, one of the Revolution's most important achievements.

Very early on, the White House decided that this would be an effective tactic, since until 1959 of the more than 40 000 pharmaceuticals and products for medical use (drugs, reagents, disposable materials, instruments, etc) registered in Cuba, more than 80 percent of these came from foreign, mainly U.S. companies. Similarly, Cuban laboratories bought nearly all of their raw materials for the little they produced at that time from the United States.

Starting in the early '60s U.S. officials, being very aware of Cuba's dependence, made a point of hindering these supplies to Cuba, until they had completely eliminated it. Ever since they have done everything on heaven and earth to try and force the rest of the world to do the same.

The situation facing Cubans became substantially worse when the socialist markets in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe disappeared. For more than 30 years these had served to minimize considerably the blockade's overall effects.

In these circumstances, while receiving less hard currency income, Cuba was obliged to pay extremely high freight charges and product prices, caused on the one hand by the distances and on the other hand by the special way Cuba was treated by businesspeople, who provided a service or sold a medical product under the risk of having sanctions imposed by the U.S. blockade.

Owing to that situation, in just one year in the '90s Cuba spent over 45 million excess dollars to meet its needs in the public health sphere. This sum, if there were no blockade, could for example have been used to buy enough powdered milk to make 180 million liters.

One of the greatest impacts arising from the United States isolation policies is the high freight charges for importing goods from European ports and airports or from other distant regions.

## ASTRONOMICALLY HIGH FREIGHT CHARGES

Official statistics show that as of last year Cuba paid some six million dollars annually in air and sea freight charges for goods for public health services.

It would have paid only one or two million if the cargo had been bought in nearby markets and under normal trading conditions.

This effect of the blockade is immediately reflected in an increase in the foreign debt and in a greater allocation of hard currency for these excessive freight charges, often air freight charges to ensure the quick arrival of goods that are very sensitive, being vital for the health and sometimes the lives of human beings.

The frequent use of air transportation, even though it is much more expensive, results from the fact that at this juncture Cuba's medical reserves are limited and we cannot spare the time a long sea crossing takes, not to mention the fact that the blockade also affects the availability of shipping vessels.

The following illustrates this point:

As is known, Cuba has been suffering from an epidemic of what has been labeled epidemic neuropathy. Just for the partial shipment of a consignment of vitamins and excipients (inert substances used in the manufacture of pills) to make tablets to be taken by patients and as a preventative measure by the rest of the population, air freight charges from Europe cost 237 448 dollars.

If the blockade had not forbidden access to the U.S. market and to U.S. subsidiaries closer by, freight costs would have only been 55 900 dollars. In other words, our country was forced to spend 181 548 dollars extra in one of the many transactions undertaken to fight the epidemic.

Another example: If we analyze the amounts paid between 1991 and 1992 for 32 products used in the health care system, we see that air freight charges from Europe were 26 037 dollars, a sum which would have been reduced to only 2413 dollars if the goods had come from the United States.

With the 23 624 dollars extra that it was forced by the blockade to pay, Cuba could have bought 10 453 vials of methotrexate, which is used for treating children suffering from acute leukemia. This is 87 percent of the country's demand for this drug.

## OBSESSED WITH DEPRIVING CUBA OF MEDICINES

For more than three decades, the White House has had an explicit ban on Cuba buying medicines in the United States, the world's largest and most influential market, a fact that at one time was harshly criticized by *The New York Times*, among others.

A similar case is chemical reagents, essential for carrying out the clinical tests which make it possible to guarantee health services and vital for expanding the pharmaceutical industry.

The U.S. blockade on these essential items has meant that Cuba, faced with finding suppliers in faraway places, has had to pay between 30 and 40 percent more to middlemen and has had to spend more time in obtaining the products it needs, sometimes urgently.

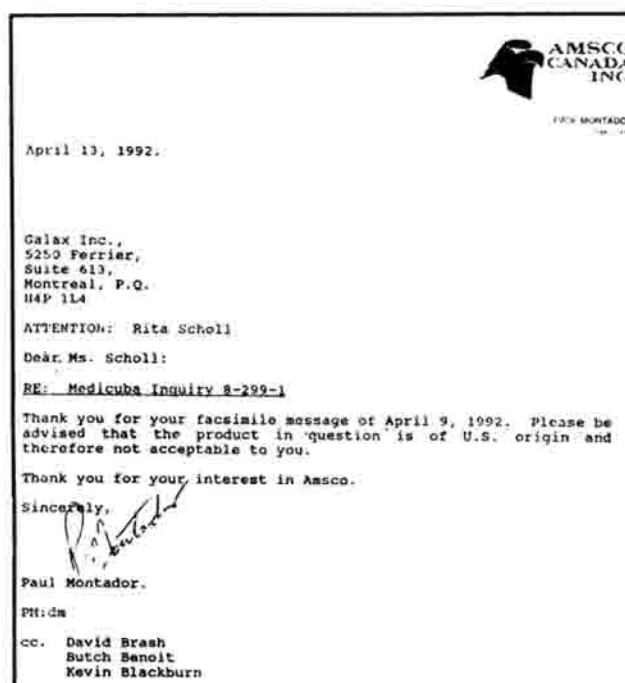
The aforementioned epidemic neuropathy once again serves as a more concrete example.

• The CDA [Cuban Democracy Act] also authorizes the licensed export and sale of medicine to anyone in Cuba, including the government, if there is adequate on-site inspection and other appropriate means to verify that the items are not misused. The allegations that the United States in some way prevents medicine from getting to the Cuban people is simply not true. In addition, under the CDA, food donations to Cuba-based individuals or non-governmental organizations have been deregulated. Let me repeat, so that there is no doubt, this administration is committed to doing everything possible to alleviate the personal suffering of our Cuban neighbors...

(Taken from a speech delivered by Michael M. Skol, principal deputy assistant secretary of state for inter-American affairs, before the Women's National Democratic Club Educational Foundation of November 18, 1993)

**Blockade's  
impact  
on medical  
care**

## If it's of U.S. origin...



**A Canadian supplier's negative reply to a Cuban request to buy medical equipment: "Please be advised that the product in question is of U.S. origin."**

Among the numerous documents that the Cuban health authorities provided me with is a contract for just three reagents that were bought in order to combat the disease from a European supplier. Including freight charges, this purchase involved an outlay of 1938 dollars for each transaction.

To provide an idea of the harm this does to the national economy, it is enough to point out that, according to the price catalog of the U.S. company SIGMA, and adding on freight charges, if there were no blockade regulation these same products would have cost 827 dollars, that is to say, some 134 percent less than what was spent on each purchase.

If such a saving had been made, it would have been possible to buy with that money approximately 2485 milliliters of bovine fetal serum, an essential component of the reagent used into test pregnant women for possible abnormalities of the fetus.

Another comparison serves to show even more clearly the reality of this unusual process.

A contract for 1992-1993 covering the prices of 24 medical products is particularly significant when compared to the prices set for the same merchandise by the Miami company Talgex International Export.

In just one purchase, Cuba spent 986 386 dollars above the prices advertised by Talgex, without taking into account the additional burden imposed by freight charges.

For example, for one of the medicines included in the aforementioned contract, nifedipine, which is used in the treatment of cardiovascular diseases, the cost to Cuba was 111.67 dollars a kilogram, while in the Talgex catalog it was listed at 61.56 dollars.

Another aspect of the problem is demonstrated by

numerous difficulties that the blockade causes Cuba in obtaining specific medicines, made more acute in a number of ways when it is necessary to resort to costly and prolonged intermediate actions.

Included in that more complicated context are third generation antibiotics, which are mainly used in intensive care units, as well as cytostatics for the treatment of cancer patients.

Lilly, a large U.S. company, and its subsidiaries in Latin America produce insulin, which, as is well known, is indispensable for diabetic patients. But these companies refuse, because of the blockade, to sell that product to Cuba, which in turn has had to resort to the remote European market to guarantee diabetics proper medical care.

In Cuba there are 16.5 diabetics per 1000 inhabitants, a considerable proportion of whom are insulin dependent, which is the same as saying that their lives are closely tied to the existence of this precious medicine.

## PLEASE... GIVE THE CUBAN DISABLED A BREAK IN GENEVA

Another significant example is Cuba's relations with the Dutch company Enraf Nonius, which from 1981 on supplied the equipment and spare parts used in the rehabilitation of disabled patients. Eighty percent of rehabilitation facilities are equipped by that firm.

On July 16, 1991, the Dutch company sent a letter to Havana stating that it was putting an end to such supplies because George Bush's Republican administration had not granted them the authorization that the blockade demands on products which have a specific number of U.S. components.

Since such a step affected the treatment of numerous disabled patients, the Cuban authorities, just as in other cases, were obliged to seek far more costly solutions around the world, even in the midst of the precarious financial situation that the country is facing.

In regard to technology, the Cuban health system is forced to take extraordinary steps to acquire textbooks and magazines, at the same time that specialists have been prevented from taking part in scientific courses or meetings held in the United States.

And then there is the case of books, until 1989, the Spanish company Editorial Interamericana S.A. sold Cuba the books needed by the medical sector, but from that year on, after the company was taken over by the U.S. company McGraw Hill, transactions were suspended.

Despite everything, Cuba has achieved extraordinary development in public health, which has even been acknowledged by eminent personalities from U.S. scientific institutions who since 1993 have collaborated in research into epidemic neuropathy, the vanguard of the noble activity that should some day exist in the Third World.

Cuba has met the health goals proclaimed by the United Nations for underdeveloped nations to greet the new millennium, and already went beyond those goals some years ago in certain aspects, reaching levels similar to those in developed countries.

Cuba has been able to preserve its basic gains despite the systematic efforts by Washington to obstruct the medical care for the population, as part of a general plan aimed at creating internal difficulties, diminishing support for the way of life that prevails in Cuba and, finally, trying to turn it back into the way it was.



# New Zealand: investment heaven for

BY GEORGE FYSON

Over the past year, articles in the big business press around the world have repeatedly carried glowing references to the prospects for making a bundle from investments in New Zealand, where an economic recovery has been gaining strength since early 1993. Many wealthy speculators and entrepreneurs, particularly in the United States, have been building up their investments there.

In the last decade, successive governments of the social democratic Labour Party and the conservative National Party have carried out a radical economic restructuring. They have slashed social welfare programs, cut wages, worsened working conditions, and pushed through sweeping privatizations of state-owned companies. As a result, labor productivity has risen at the expense of the standard of living of working people — making New Zealand a dream come true for capitalists worldwide.

In May, the *Washington Post* headlined a story, "Investors Aren't Sheepish About New Zealand — The Kiwis' Stunning Economic Turnabout Has Attracted Big Bond Money From the United States." An official at the New Zealand embassy in Washington proudly told the paper, "There simply hasn't been an economy that has undergone such a thorough reconstruction in the last few years. We are virtually the only country in the world that has abolished agricultural subsidies and virtually all other kinds of subsidies cold turkey."

An article in the December 18 London *Economist* explained that the average return on share investments was higher in New Zealand than elsewhere in the Asian region — including Australia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Malaysia, Taiwan, Singapore, and Japan.

## 'Remarkable transformation'

The article extolled the "remarkable transformation of New Zealand's economy. Once choked by inflation, protectionism, and rigid labour markets, New Zealand has performed a volte-face," the *Economist* proclaimed, "thanks largely to painful reforms instituted by James Bolger, the prime minister, and his former finance minister, Ruth Richardson. Inefficient nationalised industries were privatised, wage negotiations were decentralised and government spending was slashed. That has led to high unemployment, but it has made New Zealand companies more competitive. Manufactured exports have grown in value by 15 percent in each of the past two years."

*Barron's*, a New York investment weekly, also listed a number of positive signs for investors. "The [New Zealand] budget deficit is shrinking so rapidly, owing to higher-than-expected tax revenues, that a surplus is forecast in fiscal 1995," said an article in the February 21 issue. "This could lead to an upgrading of the nation's credit rating. In-

flation remains under control, and the currency is strong. Long-term interest rates are expected to stay in a narrow band. Unemployment is falling, and a glut of downtown office space is disappearing."

New Zealand's credit rating was upgraded in March, the first upgrade for 10 years. The Wall Street weekly also noted that New Zealand's stock exchange index had risen by nearly 40 percent in 1993.

## 1987 stock market crash

New Zealand's current economic upturn stands in marked contrast to most of the previous decade. The crash of October 1987 hit the country's stock market particularly hard. Companies listed on the stock exchange basically lost half their value at that



New Zealand prime minister Jim Bolger

time. Many did not begin to recover until 1993.

Drastic restructuring of industry has also marked the past 10 years in New Zealand. The deep recession of 1982 signaled to the capitalists that they were heading for disaster. Their ability to compete in the world capitalist market was increasingly hamstrung by a protectionist regime that had lasted many decades. An increasingly outdated infrastructure and high tariffs on imported goods resulted in high production costs.

Part and parcel of the bosses' goals in this period was to increase productivity while laying off workers, and to drive down wages and worsen working conditions. They sought to reverse the gains made by working people through labor battles in the 1970s.

By 1984, labor resistance to attacks by the employers grew. That year, the Labour Party swept the elections, as workers hoped this party would act to protect their livelihoods.

## Labour Party government

Once elected, however, the Labour government headed by Prime Minister David Lange and Finance Minister Roger Douglas proceeded to implement the bosses' restructuring plans.

This government lowered income tax rates for those on the highest salaries and for companies, while introducing an across-the-

board sales tax — now at 12.5 percent — known as GST (Goods and Services Tax).

The government substantially cut back tariff protection of many local industries, to the benefit of the big export-oriented corporations. Together with other steps, this measure resulted in widespread job cuts and plant closures as industries and services were restructured.

Under Douglas, the Labour Party government led a crusade for the "free market." In an action applauded by the trade union bureaucracy, Douglas suddenly abandoned virtually all agricultural subsidies. Prior to their lifting, subsidies to farmers amounted to 34 percent of farm output. Today they are virtually nil. The resulting lower return for their labor drove whole layers of working farmers into poverty and forced many hundreds of farming families off the land. Between 1982 and 1992 the number of sheep on New Zealand's farms declined by 20 million to a total of 52.6 million.

The Labour Party government also began the process of selling off government agencies. To do this, it first transformed them into corporate enterprises — placing them on a profit-making basis by shedding jobs, through speedup, and by eliminating various elements of social services that they provided. A number of these government services, such as postal services, electricity production, and state housing, have not yet been sold off although they have been "corporatized," a term widely used in New Zealand, and the services they offer cut back.

The fate of the old Post Office, which included operation of the country's telephone system, is an example of the different aspects of this process. The agency was split into three parts: postal services, banking operations, and the telephone division. Postal services were curtailed and turned into a corporation, which has not been sold yet. The Post Office Savings Bank was sold to private investors in 1989. The telephone service was transformed into the Telecom Corporation and sold in 1990 after major restructuring.

## Sale of state assets

The scope of the government-owned assets and organizations that have been sold, both by the Labour government and the National Party regime that followed it in 1990, is significant. The list includes the country's major steel production plant, oil company, natural gas field, and the government's share in Air New Zealand. In addition, Bank of New Zealand, the largest trading bank, and the Rural Bank, responsible for farm lending, were privatized. Logging rights to hundreds of square miles of trees that are among the world's largest planted forests were sold as well. Private capitalists also purchased a chain of hotels, the government printing office, a film production unit, and a shipping corporation.

The most recent significant sale was of the entire railway system, to the U.S. Wisconsin Central railroad. The sale was organized by Fay, Richwhite, an investment bank, which also has a share in the new railway company. The largest sale was of the telephone system, the Telecom Corporation, now one of the three top companies that dominate the New Zealand stock market. Telecom was bought by the U.S. companies Ameritech and Bell Atlantic.

This process has been duplicated by local government authorities as well, with services such as urban commuter buses being corporatized or sold off.

Both local and foreign capitalists bought into these businesses. Because local capitalists did not have available the huge sums of capital needed to purchase some of the major pieces of state property, such as the telephone and rail systems, they often came in to these deals as junior partners of larger corporations from abroad.

The government used the income from these sales of state property — some NZ\$12.2 billion (NZ\$1.00 = US\$0.56) — to reduce its debts.

## Deep-going attacks on workers

The process of sweeping sales of government agencies and state-owned enterprises has been accompanied by deep-going attacks on the jobs, wages, working conditions, and union rights of workers in those enterprises.

Social services have also been curtailed. Access to postal services is now more diffi-

cult for workers in many places since the government closed dozens of local post offices. Prices of rail, bus, and ferry transportation have shot up. Electricity and telephone rates have increased.

The Labour government, which was in office from 1984 to 1990, began to undermine the public health system. It brought in a system of fees for prescriptions, replacing the former free medicines. Such prescriptions now cost NZ\$15 per item. Doctors' fees, formerly a nominal amount, are now NZ\$30-\$40 per visit. Hospital outpatient visits, previously free, now cost NZ\$31. Labour also replaced locally elected health boards with appointed boards of directors.

The National Party governments have continued and deepened this process. With the facilities available in the public health system steadily worsening, more and more workers are finding that they have to get health insurance, if they can afford it.

Education is also being increasingly commercialized. The government has significantly decentralized administration and funding of the school system, putting more and more of the burden on parents to fund schools through fees and community fundraising. School segregation along class and race lines is on the rise.

University and polytechnic students now pay an average 13 percent of the cost of courses, which were previously free. A government task force is proposing that this be increased up to 70 percent, or even the full cost. Average student debt has risen to more than NZ\$6,000 per capita, nearly four times the level in 1991. Students are now working an average 20 hours a week, more than double the level in 1991.

## Number of homeless rising

The number of working people forced to share homes, or sleep in cars, tents, caravans, or sheds because they cannot afford to meet the cost of accommodation has increased sharply. The government has jacked up the formerly low rents for state housing, making them comparable to rates charged by private landlords. State houses, which account for 23 percent of all rented dwellings, previously provided low-rent accommodation.

Today, some 100,000 families in both state and private housing pay more than 50 percent of household income on rent, and 49 percent of all tenants pay more than 40 percent of their income in rent.

One of the first moves of the National Party government elected in 1990 was to slash unemployment, sickness, and old-age benefits by up to 25 percent. There are 1.2 million people who are dependent on benefits out of a population of 3.5 million.

The Social Welfare Department, which administers these benefits, is empowered to access employer and bank records and share computer data with the immigration and tax departments as part of its efforts to keep a tight rein on beneficiaries. Computer information matching has been used to track down undocumented immigrants and beneficiaries who travel overseas or work a job. The government uses these records to collect debts up to 25 years old, and to garnish wages of thousands of workers it says owe maintenance (child support) payments to the welfare department.

A worker who is fired or quits a job voluntarily, or who travels overseas, can be turned down for unemployment benefits for up to six months.

These cutbacks in social services, coupled with the ongoing depressed economic conditions, have had a visible effect on working people. A recent article in the Lon-

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# capitalists, disaster for working people



High school students join 1991 protest against government austerity measures in Auckland, New Zealand.

don *Independent* described New Zealand as "the world's first post welfare state."

The article described this process. "What happens when you scrap the welfare state?" the author asked, explaining that the answer is armed police on the streets, one in seven people below the poverty line, record numbers of prisoners in jail, and huge queues at charity food banks.

After noting some of the recent signs of the latest economic recovery, the article describes a "darker side" to the changes. "You notice an old man whizzing along the footpath on an electric cart, braking at each litter bin to go through the contents."

"You read a furious media debate about a Methodist minister who says the theft of food can be condoned when a family is starving. The fact that children are going hungry at all, in a country whose export wharves are groaning with butter, cheese, wine, apples, and lamb, seems not to be an issue," the article said.

## Role of union misleadership

Critical to the ability of New Zealand's capitalist rulers to begin driving through this series of assaults was the role of the Labour Party government and a tame union movement. The trade union officialdom guaranteed that there was no organized opposition from the union ranks to what the Labour government was doing.

The central union leadership's stance has been no different under National Party rule. They accept the bosses' restructuring process as necessary, having no alternative to it. The bottom line is their backing of the same course as the rulers: promote New Zealand exports and the profitability of New Zealand business as the road to more jobs.

They have proved unable to speak out against any of the attacks on the social wage, being more divorced from the working class than ever in history.

The officials' prime concern during this process has been to preserve a place for themselves in policing the working class through a tripartite relationship with the state and business. They have been the leading proponents of participation by unions in management boards as the means to increase productivity, efficiency, and "job security." They refer to this course as "workplace reform," and present it as the central task for unions.

The union officialdom's response to their declining dues base has been bureaucratic union mergers, commercial trading in union membership fees, and poaching wars.

A key element that the Labour Party government retained as a bribe to the union officialdom was the government-guaranteed compulsory trade unionism. Originally introduced by the first Labour Party government in the 1930s following waves of union-building struggles by workers, compulsory unionism had by the 1950s become a means of guaranteeing dues income and institutionalizing class-collaboration.

The result was that, at least on paper, some 66 percent of all wage and salary earners were union members by the beginning of the 1980s. But for most workers the union did not really exist, other than for the dues automatically deducted from their wages by the employer and passed on to the union office.

When the Labour Party regime was unceremoniously thrown out in the 1990 elections, the incoming National Party government continued and accelerated its policies of undermining the social wage. It added a series of new attacks on real wages through the Employment Contracts Act of 1991, which essentially removed all status or protection unions may have had by law. This act transferred workplace contracts to the status of common law contracts. It severely restricted the right to strike.

Since then, unions have been altogether destroyed in many, especially smaller, workplaces. In a number of enterprises, individual workers sign a "contract" with the boss when they are hired. Now, the employer can often prevent union organizers from entering a plant, thus taking away a right that previously was guaranteed by law.

Since implementation of the 1991 labor law, union membership dropped to 29 percent of the workforce.

## Wages drop, unemployment rises

From 1981 to 1992 real wages fell by 7.5 percent for the bottom one-fifth of all wage and salary earners. In the same period the wages received by the middle one-fifth also fell, by 5 percent. But wages and salaries of the top one-fifth rose by 8 percent, during the same time.

Wages are now 36 percent lower than in neighboring Australia. The adult minimum wage is NZ\$245 a week before tax; it is now common for many workers to be paid at or very close to this amount. For youth under 20 there is a minimum wage of 60 percent of the adult minimum.

Two-tier wage structures have been introduced in many plants for the first time. Many newly hired workers are classified as "temporary" or "casual." Compulsory overtime, shift work, and weekend work have become more common. Job safety has been eroded.

Unemployment has also risen from nearly zero for most of the 1970s to 11 percent at the end of 1991. With the recent economic upturn, unemployment dropped a little, to 9.2 percent. This figure includes only those actively seeking work.

The government unemployment benefit is NZ\$132 a week, after tax. Taking that figure as a poverty line, some 500,000, 14 percent of population, are at or below this level. The number of people in this poverty bracket rose by 40 percent from 1990 to 1992.

Government policies have also widened the income gap between working people and middle class layers and capitalists. The top

one-fifth of households now receive 45 percent of income, up from 35 percent in the 1970s.

In the same period unemployment among Maoris, the indigenous population of New Zealand, and among Pacific Islanders, has climbed. Official unemployment among Maoris is now 22 percent. For Pacific Island immigrants or their descendants, unemployment is 23 percent. Among Maori and Pacific Island youth unemployment is close to 50 percent. In contrast, for non-Maori and -Pacific Island workers, unemployment stands at about 7 percent.

This polarization can also be seen in the fact that more than half of the prison population are Maoris, while they make up 13 percent of the population as a whole.

Health statistics underline the same divergence: infant mortality for Maoris remains at double the rate for the population as a whole, and life expectancy remains three to four years less for Maoris than for non-Maoris.

A layer of Maoris has been propelled into the middle class as a result of concessions by the government, following broadly supported struggles by Maoris in the 1970s and '80s over land, language, fishing, and other rights. But the great majority have seen their conditions worsen in recent years. The number of Maori households in the bottom one-fifth of overall incomes has risen from 14 percent of Maori households in 1988, to 43 percent of Maori households in 1992.

The economic upturn has not abated the rulers' attacks on working people. Following its narrow victory by a single parliamentary seat in the 1993 elections, the National Party government of James Bolger dropped Finance Minister Ruth Richardson, to the chagrin of capitalist commentators in Britain and elsewhere. Richardson was the minister most closely identified with the cabinet core known as the "razor gang," which pushed ahead the government's radical economic restructuring.



## PATHFINDER AROUND THE WORLD

Duane Stilwell

Pathfinder, located in New York with distributors in Australia, Britain, and Canada, publishes the works of working-class and communist leaders of the worldwide struggles against exploitation and oppression. Pathfinder bookstores are listed in the directory on page 12.

Pathfinder is now filling advance orders for more than 1,500 copies of "The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution," the title of issue number 9 of the Marxist magazine *New Internationalist*. Pathfinder distributes *New Internationalist* in English, French, Spanish, and Swedish. The first issue in Swedish, *Ny Internationalist*, featuring the article "The Opening Guns of World War III: Washington's Assault on Iraq" by Jack Barnes, appeared in Stockholm in 1993.

The *Changing Face of U.S. Politics* will be the next title published by Pathfinder. The new edition, scheduled to appear at the end of April, will include a new preface, new sections, chapter openers, photos, and a new four-color cover.

The *Bookseller*, the main British book publishing magazine, printed a letter to the editor in its March 25 issue from John Pate-man. He wrote, "Many Cuban working people and youth [are] more eager than ever to expand their access to literature and ideas from all sources. . . . In spite of the economic difficulties there are no plans to close any libraries. Cuban librarians are working to overcome the U.S. embargo through the international exchange of literature. In the UK [United Kingdom], efforts are being made to help the Cuban people satisfy their thirst for books. The Pathfinder

ing. But while the Bolger government has sought a more moderate image, the process continues, driven by capitalism's needs. The new Minister of Finance, Bill Birch, was quick to signal that privatization would continue.

The step by step "commercialization" of health care services is ongoing. The latest step in this area is an unprecedented attack on the incomes of old people faced with long-term hospital care. Previously, such people could go to a public hospital and have the government cover the costs. Now, a new stringent test means that the government covers the hospital costs only when the individual's assets have been reduced to NZ\$6,500. The government confiscates an individual's house, car, savings, or other personal holdings to cover hospital bills.

This measure led to a round of public protests in some 72 cities and towns in February. The participants roundly booed both government spokespeople and Labour Party representatives at these meetings.

## Political instability

The depth and extent of the economic crisis in New Zealand, in the context of a worldwide depression, has led to deep-going political polarization. The capitalist rulers are concerned that a long period of two-party stability has ended. For many decades politics has been dominated by two major capitalist parties, National and Labour. When the National Party nearly lost the November elections, the stock market plunged. Capitalists around the world expressed dismay at the prospect of a hung parliament.

The Labour Party has seen a series of splits, and could well face more. One grouping, now known as the Alliance, has lately had higher poll ratings than Labour itself. The central plank of the Alliance party is for government protection of New Zealand's capitalist industries, a long-standing

Continued on Page 12

Bookshop (071-401-2409) has launched a Books for Cuba Fund, and I am organizing within the Library Association to support Cuban libraries. The support of your readers and the British book trade would be greatly appreciated."

The *Tablet*, a national Catholic weekly newspaper published in New Zealand, printed a review of the new Pathfinder title *Nelson Mandela Speaks* in its March 6 issue.

Rev. John Murray begins his review by quoting Mandela's words when he was released from prison: "I stand here before you today not as a prophet, but as a humble servant of you, the people."

"To me," Murray states, "this book contains the best survey of recent South African history to help us understand their situation. It is brief and touches the human depths. . . ."

"His first book of speeches from 1944-90 he entitled *The Struggle is My Life*. . . this second book marks the culmination of his struggle and is a message to us all."

The Pathfinder bookstore in Detroit has sold 65 copies of *Nelson Mandela Speaks*.

Pathfinder sales representatives in Cleveland combined a sales trip to Youngstown with participation in the Youngstown State University's African Marketplace, where they sold \$83 worth of literature at a booth set up by the Cleveland Pathfinder bookstore. They also met vendors from a bookstore in Cleveland and one in Youngstown. Of three stores visited, one took 17 titles and a total of 28 books; the other two promised future orders through wholesalers.



# Behind recent plunge in stock, bond prices

## Expanding balloon of debt, paper values threatens economic catastrophe

BY GREG ROSENBERG

The U.S. economy is in the midst of an upturn in the business cycle. The owners of capital are experiencing an export boom, fueled by continued "downsizing" and cost-cutting. While unemployment hovers around 6.5 percent, manufacturers are being forced to hire substantial numbers of new workers, many of them young.

A March 6 *Washington Post* editorial boasted that "the country may be entering a period of stable prosperity unlike anything since the 1960s." If this is the case, why did the stock and bond markets plummet in the first quarter of 1994, sending wealthy investors into a nervous frenzy?

In the last week of March, U.S. stock and bond markets took a nosedive, as did those

### NEWS ANALYSIS

in most of the imperialist centers. From early February through the beginning of April stock prices declined nearly 9 percent — the worst since 1990. At the same time bonds took their biggest fall since the 1987 stock market crash. The price of 30-year U.S. treasury bonds, for example, plunged 14 percent between January 28 and April 4.

Capitalist investors hemorrhaged billions of dollars or made a killing, depending on their market position. The fallout prompted a wave of commentary in the big-business press as to the causes of the drop. Invariably, the so-called experts described the events as a "correction" in the markets.

The financial markets' tumble reveals an important fact about the current upturn, which occurs in the opening years of a worldwide depression. As a result of the declining rate of profit in industrial production, the employing class is engaged in a furious round of price competition. Rivalry among capitalists in the United States and their competitors in Europe and Asia is proceeding at the same time the employers seek to drive down workers' wages and junk health and safety in the name of efficiency.

This puts deflationary pressures on the world economy — a tendency toward falling prices for raw materials and commodities.

Driven to invest where they can get the highest rate of return, businessmen have poured massive amounts of capital into a growing speculative bubble. It is more profitable for them to gamble on the ups and downs of stock and bond prices than to invest in building new factories and expanding plant capacity. When that bubble bursts, working people face the threat of wholesale economic collapse and widespread unemployment.

#### Place of stocks, bonds in economy

Wall Street brokers and specialists predict which way markets will swing with great self-assurance — until the rug is pulled out from under them. Just what exactly are stocks and bonds, and what determines their price?

A share of stock represents part ownership in a corporation. A stockholder makes



Wall Street stock exchange. Bond markets suffered worst fall since 1987 crash.

money in two ways: by dividend payments while they own the stock and by selling the stock for more than they paid for it.

At any given moment a stock is only as valuable as people with money to buy them think it is. Trading on Wall Street is greatly affected by the confidence of the class that rules the United States. The previous three-year explosion in stock prices only made sense because people with capital were willing to pay ever-expanding amounts for the shares.

A bond is a loan. The government, corporations, and other institutions sell bonds to investors when they need to borrow money. The bond market, in dollar volume, is far larger than the stock market. Bondholders receive regular, fixed interest payments for as long as they hold bond certificates. The entire value of the bond is supposed to be repaid to the holder after a certain amount of time, when its maturity date is reached.

Over the past 100 years, trade in stocks, bonds, and other commercial paper has become integral to the functioning of the world capitalist system. Like commodities themselves, debt and paper values are not things. They are part of production and reproduction of capitalist social relations.

In 1895, communist leader Frederick Engels, noting the rise of stock exchanges, remarked that they have "the tendency to concentrate the whole of production, industrial as well as agricultural, together with the whole of commerce — means of communication as well as the exchange function — in the hands of stock-exchange speculators, so that the stock exchange becomes the most pre-eminent representative of capitalist production as such."

The stock and bond markets have taken on a growing importance as a channel for

capitalists to redeploy money capital where they can reap the highest profit. This is not just a question for a small layer of degenerate speculators. To keep a business going and revenues coming in, few capitalists can avoid becoming involved in buying and selling paper.

"The [stock and bond] blowout revealed that a global bond game based on immense leverage had quietly been building," said an April 18 editorial in *Business Week*. "As long as interest rates were falling, the game felt like a sure thing," the magazine continued. The editors said the stock and bond decline was "the loud pop of a speculative bubble bursting."

#### Massive leveraging

Since the post-1982 economic upturn, the owners of capital have invested staggering amounts in a wide array of paper securities (stocks and bonds).

In November 1993, some \$1 billion a day was pouring into mutual funds, which are bundles of stocks and bonds. Last year, more new money poured into bonds alone than the total size of the bond market in 1986.

The massive leveraging — using a small amount of capital or equity in combination with a large amount of borrowing — means that today, Wall Street firms hold \$27 worth of bonds and other securities for each \$1 of equity (ownership). Such debt expansion builds growing hunks of the economy on a house of cards.

Banks are warehousing huge amounts of government bonds. Bank loans for securities have increased to 3.7 percent of total loans, near double the rate of four years ago.

For the past several years, banks have bought government bonds, watched interest rates fall, and gotten richer. But they can only do this as long as the dollar remains strong vis-a-vis other currencies, there is no inflation or rise in interest rates, and there are no explosive developments that sharpen instability in the world.

Another element in the speculative boom is hedge funds. These are operations that use a web of deals to put together packages of securities where investors "hedge" their bets — by taking two positions on the same stock or bond in the hope of protecting against losses. Through a series of complicated maneuvers, these funds guarantee automatic buying or selling when securities hit a certain price.

Hedge funds have not escaped the leveraging phenomenon. In recent years, investors put up as little as a penny of their own funds for every dollar they invest in stocks and bonds. They borrow the rest. This means that hedge funds are leveraged at up to 100 to 1. In good times, investors received enormous returns. When the bond market fell out, however, hedge fund investors were clobbered. Capitalist financier George Soros, a hedge fund operator, lost \$600 million in the first quarter of 1994 as markets imploded.

A number of factors contributed to the blow to the confidence of stock and bondholders that sent markets into a spin. Chief

among these was a seemingly irrational fear of inflation — a tendency toward higher commodity prices and a devaluing currency. In an inflationary period, the employers and bankers stand to lose huge amounts of capital, as they can never be sure of what a commodity they buy or sell will be worth the next day.

Currently, there are no big inflationary pressures in the imperialist economies. In fact, the tendency is toward deflation. In Britain, annual inflation fell from 2.8 percent in February to 2.4 percent in March. Inflation in the United States stands at 2.4 percent on an annual basis.

#### Inflation and interest rates

An article in the April 11 *Financial Times* said that in Japan "conditions are in place for a classic, 1930s-style deflation, a downward spiral of falling prices and falling demand which characterized the Great Depression."

The Federal Reserve, which acts to protect the interests of capital, raised interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point on February 4 and again on March 22, to 3.5 percent. Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan said the move was intended to fight perceptions that the economy might "overheat," setting off an inflationary spiral. This set off the panic among bondholders.

On April 18, the Federal Reserve again raised short-term interest rates another quarter of a percentage point. Stock and bond markets fell sharply on the news.

Bond prices and interest rates generally work in an inverse proportion. Changes in rates affect prices of bonds. Since a bond is issued with a fixed interest rate, holders of existing bonds are stuck with what they hold, unless they can sell it.

When interest rates drop, the value of existing bonds usually goes up; when interest rates climb, the value of existing bonds usually falls.

For example, say General Electric (GE) issues bonds with 6 percent interest. At the time, this looks good, so investors buy their bonds at \$1,000 per bond. When interest rates rise, new bonds are paying 8 percent interest. No one wants to buy bonds offering only 6 percent interest. To sell the GE bond, holders have to offer it at a discount. The reverse is also true. Lower interest rates mean that new bonds are issued at 5 percent interest, making the existing GE bond look good. Investors are willing to pay a premium for it.

#### Political developments intervene

The stock market crash in 1987 revealed the explosive pressures that had been building up in world capitalism over the preceding decades. These pressures on the entire financial system have continued to mount.

The workings of stock, bond, and other markets don't occur in a vacuum. Political developments in the world — wars and the threat of wars, government instability, workers' battles — have a big impact on investors' confidence and capital flows.

*Barron's*, a big-business investment weekly published in New York, cited "the vibrancy of the economy and what that implies — mounting credit demands, pressure on prices, a more assertive labor force" as negative factors that led to the plunge of stock and bond values.

The trade dispute between Washington and Tokyo also played a role in the fallout.

The shocks to the financial markets, while they seem to have little immediate effect on the lives of working people, point to the danger workers face in the years ahead.

As the expanding balloon of debt and paper values gets bigger and bigger, it is only a matter of time before it explodes, possibly bringing the entire banking system and currencies down with it. In recent years all sorts of pension funds, savings plans, and other funds for services working people count on have been thrown into stock and bond speculation. These funds could disappear during another stock market crash.

Throughout the history of capitalism, every major economic and social crisis has been signaled in the most heated and vulnerable spot in the capitalist economy: the arena of credit and monetary relations. Wall Street has usually registered the early tremors of each sharp economic downturn. Last quarter's fallout in the stock market is a harbinger of just that.

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# Will flogging à la Singapore solve crime problem?

BY SARA LOBMAN

"If caning and other strong laws can control crime in Singapore," syndicated columnist Cal Thomas wrote in an April 7 piece, "perhaps similar measures will work here." Thomas was defending the brutal flogging that Michael Fay, an 18-year-old U.S.-born high school student, has been sentenced to by a court in Singapore for allegedly spray-painting several cars.

## AS I SEE IT

Thomas is not alone. The debate over the flogging in Singapore is being used by capitalist politicians in the United States to reinforce their anti-working-class "war on crime." This anti-crime demagoguery — with calls for harsher sentences, more prisons, and greater power in the hands of the cops — gains a hearing among many workers and middle-class layers who want to see an end to the real violence, drug abuse, and other social problems that exist.

Many people are willing to accept that these problems, rather than the capitalist system itself, are the root cause of the devastating economic and social crisis they are living through. Bourgeois commentators argue that it is necessary for working people to sacrifice democratic rights if they want to live in a safe and prosperous society. But this is false.

### 'Brutal, but it works'

Caning may seem "an excessive punishment for a first non-violent act of vandalism," but it works, right-wing columnist Patrick Buchanan says. "Singapore is a clean, safe city where men and women walk secure at night."

"With America's current crime problem, it's not in a good position to lecture on law and order," an editorial in the March 31 *Wall Street Journal* says. "Nor would we categorically rule out corporal punishment." The *Journal*'s editors argue that "the U.S. criminal justice system has gone too far, and that the pendulum needs to swing back toward the community's right to safety."

Thomas even speaks favorably of "colonial America," where "criminals were subjected to public ridicule, public floggings, even public hangings."

Meanwhile, the House of Representatives began discussions April 14 on U.S. president Bill Clinton's "anti-crime" bill. This legislation, already approved by the Senate, would reinstate the death penalty for 60 crimes, speed up executions, and limit the right to appeal for prisoners on

death row. It would designate billions of additional dollars for more prisons and cops. Under its "three strikes and you're out" provisions, anyone convicted of three violent crimes would automatically be sentenced to life in prison without parole.

"Congress is eager to demonstrate its toughness against crime," an article in the April 15 *New York Times* said. Thirty-eight people were executed in the United States in 1993, the greatest number since the resumption of capital punishment in 1976. On March 31, William Hance was put to death, in spite of the fact that two jurors reported the trial proceedings were marked by misinformation, misconduct, and racial bias.

In his April 7 article, syndicated columnist William Safire, who condemns flogging as torture, goes on to defend the death penalty in the United States as "painless."

### Scapegoats working people

Why are so many ruling-class spokespeople beating the anti-crime drums right now? Certainly, crime is a problem, and working people are rightly concerned about the social breakdown it represents. But the fact is, violent crime has actually decreased in the last 20 years, once adjustments are made for population increases. And most other kinds of crime have declined too.

Besides, the U.S. bosses and their hangers-on aren't really interested in stopping crime. They're some of the biggest criminals! It's not just the world-class crimes they commit — the 100 million people murdered in imperialist wars this century; the scores killed a year ago by U.S. government agents in Waco, Texas; the 26 people blown out of the sky by U.S. fighter jets over Iraq — but the smaller "everyday" crimes as well.

On April 16, for example, 12 New York City cops were arrested and charged with forcing local drug dealers to pay them protection money to operate. The cops beat up dealers who wouldn't cooperate and stole hundreds of thousands of dollars in drugs and cash from others.

By raising the real concern about crime that exists among working people and others to a hysterical pitch, the employers hope they can blame crime — and those who commit crimes — for the economic and social crisis that is, in fact, created by capitalism. The war on crime also makes it much easier for them to go after hard-won democratic rights, including freedom of speech, freedom from search and seizure, protection from cruel and unusual punishment, and presumption of innocence. In the end, anti-crime legislation ends up strengthening the hand of

the capitalist class in its war against the standard of living and democratic rights of working people.

As part of their get-tough-on-crime campaign, Buchanan, Thomas, and others poke fun at the argument of many liberals that poverty causes crime. "We explain and excuse violent criminals and their actions because they were abused, or they are poor, or otherwise disadvantaged," Thomas says. "But most poor, abused, or disadvantaged people don't become criminals. So the explanation is flawed."

The rightists win some support on this. Poor people *don't* cause crime, but *capitalism* does. Its dog-eat-dog nature, that breeds competition and breaks down human solidarity, creates a criminal layer of people — pimps, drug dealers, hired killers — that prey on working people and others.

Capitalism also breeds alienation and despair within the working class that leads some people, particularly young men who often are more footloose than their older or female counterparts, to criminal activity.

### Working-class solution

There are two ways for youth who are fed up with capitalism to go. They can seek individual solutions, including getting involved in criminal activity, or they can join with others to overthrow the entire rotten system of capitalism and fight to build a new, socialist society based on human solidarity instead of profits.

This points to the importance of working class struggles, led by the trade unions, to advance the interests of all those exploited and oppressed by the wealthy capitalists who rule society, the cream of the crime cartel. It is only a strong, fighting labor movement that will be able to pull a generation of young fighters into real working-class political action. The striking Teamsters and Allegheny Ludlum steelworkers, the locked-out Staley workers, and the resilient fighters at Caterpillar provide good examples today.

There is no short-term answer to the "crime problem." The rulers' cops, prisons, whips, and electric chairs are aimed at silencing the whole working class. But there is an answer for young people and others who are trying to figure out if it is possible to rid themselves of the alienation and lead a meaningful life under capitalism: that's to join the communist movement to help take the power out of the hands of the real criminals, the capitalist class, once and for all. This is the answer to Clinton's "anti-crime" bill or to Buchanan, Thomas, and Co.

# Support grows for nationwide Teamsters strike



Striking Teamsters picket Consolidated Freight lines in Blaine, Minnesota.

Continued from front page  
members of Local 728 in Atlanta. The Atlanta Labor Council is setting up a food bank for the Teamsters and the city's farmers market has donated food to them. Teamster officials have urged nonstriking members to join the picket lines, and unionists from Carolina Freight Carriers responded by bringing cash donations.

### Invitations to speak to unionists, students

Striking Teamsters will address members of IAM Local 368 at Miami International Airport. The Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union is beginning solidarity picketing in Miami as well. Officials of Teamsters Local 120, which represents nearly 2,000 strikers in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area, will address local meetings of the UTU at CPRail (Canadian Pacific) in St. Paul and the IAM at its Minneapolis hub. Delegations of young people here, organized by the University of Minnesota-based Student Political Organizing Committee (SPOC), have visited several picket lines. The youth group is planning a

campus meeting for the strikers.

In Utah, striking Teamsters have set up informational pickets at nonunion haulers who carry struck freight. The impact of the strike has sparked discussion among Teamsters working for United Parcel Service (UPS). Strikers suspect that many haulers are using UPS to re-route business. Support for the idea of "honoring a Teamster picket line is overwhelming here," said Mike Bodily, a city driver in the Salt Lake-Bountiful area.

On April 18, 50 placard-waving Teamster strikers from 10 New York City-area locals picketed the downtown Manhattan offices of Kelso & Co., which owns ABF. The hauler's

chairman, William Marquand, is chief negotiator for Trucking Management Incorporated (TMI), the trucking boss association representing the struck haulers. TMI handles 15 percent of U.S. dry freight, including manufactured goods, parts, and non-perishable food.

The Teamsters and TMI resumed national negotiations April 17 in Washington, D.C., after four months of bargaining collapsed in March in the face of the bosses' unrelenting concessions demands. "Part of the reason we are coming back together is the pressure on both sides from the strike," stated Charles O'Conner, a TMI lawyer. Clinton administration officials, including Transportation Secretary Federico Pena and Labor Secretary Robert Reich, are also pushing for a resumption of negotiations.

Roadway, a major national hauler, filed a court brief April 15 demanding restrictions on picketing. The company claims that after a week, the Teamster strike has already blocked 300 shipments of \$12-15 million worth of freight. A day earlier, 20 cops in the Boston

suburb of Canton sprayed Teamster strikers with mace, arresting four unionists, to clear a path for a scab truck at the APA Transport terminal. The Teamsters will be charged with "violation of the civil rights" of the driver, Canton police Sgt. Peter Bright stated.

### Clashes with police

In the first week of the strike, major clashes between strikers and police took place in suburbs of Chicago and Boston as cops sought to break up picket lines at Roadway terminals. Severe limitations against picketing have been obtained by Yellow Freight in Miami, suburban Minneapolis, and elsewhere.

On April 14 TNT Red Star bosses in Newark sought to use a Teamster goodwill

gesture of allowing a struck shipment of an anticancer drug to run additional freight. Up to 30 pickets from Local 641 repulsed the unauthorized truck, as cops were called to the scene. "At first I thought this [strike] would be over in a week or two," one Teamster said, "but it's getting nastier out here, uglier and uglier. We're going to be out here a long time."

Jon Hillson is a member of the UTU in St. Paul. Mike Bodily in Salt Lake City; Mary Nell Bockman in New York City; Bob Braxton in Atlanta; Harvey McArthur in Seattle; Janet Post in Miami; Karen Ray in Boston; Linda Marcus, M.J. Rahn, and Maurice Williams in Newark; and Joe Young in Vancouver contributed to this article.

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# South Africa

Continued from front page  
fighting to protect people who want to vote. "I would like to vote in Natal," he said in the Zulu language in a visit to Lamontville, another Natal township.

## Historic moment nears

The elections will register a historic moment in South Africa, brought to this point by the revolutionary mobilization of working people over many decades. The regime of the white minority, a linchpin in the racist apartheid system, will take its last breath.

On April 26, special voting will be held for those who are pregnant, aged, disabled, or sick. South Africans living overseas will also vote on that day.

Most people will vote on April 27, which has been declared a public holiday, and April 28. The results of the election will be announced at least 48 hours after the polls close but not more than 10 days later, by May 8. The de Klerk government and Transitional Executive Council (TEC) will remain as caretakers until the new government takes power, which will probably be on May 6.

Nine provincial legislatures are scheduled to convene for the first time May 5. The national constituent assembly is expected to meet in Cape Town May 6 and elect the president of South Africa.

The president, likely to be Nelson Mandela, will be inaugurated at May 10 ceremonies in Pretoria, the former seat of apartheid rule.

More than 12,000 election monitors will be on hand at 8,500 polling stations. Some 50,000 observers are scheduled to join them to report on any incidents that may take place.

During an April 14 national television debate with de Klerk, Mandela blasted the president's claim that his National Party had abolished apartheid. "This is the reply of a man who is not used to addressing the basic needs of the population," said Mandela. "It's clear that we're dealing with someone who doesn't know what he's talking about. If he does, he doesn't understand it. [The] negotiations came as a result of the suffering of the masses," and the mobilizations against apartheid rule, said the ANC president.

## TEC proposes strike moratorium

The multiparty TEC, which has taken over growing governmental functions, called for a moratorium on all strikes by public service workers until after the election to ensure a "stable voting environment," according to the April 12 Johannesburg *Business Day*. The paper quoted ANC leader Cyril Ramaphosa, who sits on the TEC, as saying, "We will appeal to trade unions and workers themselves that all of us need to put national interests first at this critical time in South Africa's history." Many strikes continued around the country, however.

The Congress of South African Trade Unions rejected the call and said workers' ability to strike is a fundamental right.

On April 19, new battles broke out in Tokoza, one of the townships in the East Rand outside Johannesburg where some of the worst violence has occurred over the past year. Fighting centered on the Angola hostel, home to many Inkatha supporters. Firefights began in mid-April when soldiers from the new National Peace Keeping Force entered the area. The new force is comprised of soldiers from the South African military, homeland governments, and Umkhonto we Sizwe, the armed group affiliated with the ANC.

ANC Pretoria-Witswatersrand-Vereeniging regional chair Tokyo Sexwale and two other ANC leaders came under heavy gunfire after addressing residents in Tokoza. Two people died there April 18, including a photographer covering a story.

Ultrarightists are making a last ditch effort to undermine the elections. David Duke, the rightist politician and former Ku Klux Klan leader from Louisiana, came to South Africa to give them his support.

In Pretoria, Duke said April 14, "I think there'd be probably a million Americans, Canadians, Europeans that would come and help defend the Western, Christian civilization here."

Duke said, "We don't look at the former South African government as a government that was oppressive to Blacks, we look at it as a government that offered Black people tremendous opportunities."

# MILITANT LABOR FORUMS

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**The Facts on Cuba Today: Hear from Participants in the 3rd Friendship Caravan.** Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 2546-C W. Pico Blvd. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish. Tel: (213) 380-9460.

### San Francisco

**Support the Teamsters Strike.** Panel of unionists discuss the nationwide Teamsters strike. Sat., April 30, 7 p.m. 3284 23rd St. (near Mission). Donation: \$4. Tel: (415) 282-6255.

## GEORGIA

### Atlanta

**After the Massacre in Hebron: The Palestinian Struggle and the Current Crisis in the Mideast.** Speakers: Sami Jajeh, Arab American Anti-Discrimination League; Floyd Fowler, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 172 Trinity Ave. SW. Donation: \$3. Tel: (404) 577-4065.

## MICHIGAN

### Detroit

**The Fight Against Women's Oppression: From Date Rape to Defense of Abortion Rights.** Panel discussion. Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 7414 Woodward Ave. Donation: \$4. Tel: (313) 875-0100.

## NEW YORK

### Brooklyn

**The Crisis in Russia. What Does It Mean for Working People Around the World.** Speaker: Debbie Lazar, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 59 Fourth Ave. Donation: \$4. Translation into Spanish and French. Tel: (718) 399-7257.

## OHIO

### Cincinnati

**Roots of the Conflict in Korea.** Speaker: Peter

Thierjung, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Auto Workers Local 538. Sun. May 1, 6 p.m. University of Cincinnati, Law School Room 100. For more information call: (513) 221-2691.

## TEXAS

### Houston

**Oil Workers Fight Racist Policies at Shell Oil Co.** Panel discussion. Speakers: Earl Davis and Quincy Rodgers, two of the plaintiffs in the recent lawsuit that challenged Shell's racist promotion practices; Willie Reid, Socialist Workers Party. All the speakers are members of Oil Chemical and Atomic Workers Local 4-367. Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 6969 Gulf Freeway #250. Donation: \$4. Tel: (713) 644-9066.

## WASHINGTON

### Seattle

**The Elections in South Africa.** Speakers: Fred Dube, member of African National Congress and professor at The Evergreen State College; Pamela Doan, Southern Africa Action Network; and David Warshawsky, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 1405 E. Madison. Donation: \$3. Tel: (206) 323-1755.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

**Celebrate ANC Victory in the First Nonracial Elections in South Africa.** Speakers: Students from South Africa; Molly Biehl, visited South Africa, sister of Amy Biehl, activist killed in South Africa; Margrethe Siem, Socialist Workers Party, member of United Transportation Union. Sat., April 30, 7:30 p.m. 1802 Belmont Rd., NW (at 18th St. NW). Donation: \$4. Tel: (202) 387-2185.

## WEST VIRGINIA

### Morgantown

**South Africa Elections: A Historic Advance.** Speakers: Thomas Mathoma, ANC; Dan Weiner, West Virginia University professor; and Greg McCartan, Socialist Workers Party. Sat., April 30 7 p.m. 242 Walnut St. Donation: \$4. Tel: (304)

296-0055.

## AUSTRALIA

### Sydney

**The Rise and Fall of the Nicaraguan Revolution.** Speaker: Ron Poulson, Communist League. Sat., May 7, 6 p.m. Surry Hills Neighbourhood Centre, corner of Norton and Collins Streets. Donation \$4. Tel: (02) 281 3297.

## NEW ZEALAND

### Auckland

**Socialist Education weekend.** April 30-May 1. The Cuban Revolution and the Fight for Socialism, Sat., April 30, 2 p.m.; Women's Liberation and the Socialist Revolution, 4 p.m.; Building a Movement of Socialist Youth, 7 p.m.; The Fight Against Racism: The South African Example, Sun., May 1, 10:30 a.m. All sessions at La Gonda Arcade, 203 Karangahape Rd. (Down La Gonda Arcade, opposite McDonald's). Tel: (9) 379-3075.

### Christchurch

**The Fortex Closure: Another Round of Attacks on Meatworkers.** Speaker: Joan Shields, Communist League, member of Meat Workers Union. Sat., April 30, 7 p.m. 199 High St. Tel: (3) 365-6055.

## SWEDEN

### Stockholm

**Rally: For a Democratic and Free South Africa.** Thurs., April 28, 7:45-8:45 p.m. Sergels Torv. Celebrate Election Day in South Africa, at 9 p.m. Statsteatern/Kulturhuset. For more information call: (08) 31 69 33.

**The Fight Against Capitalism and For Socialism.** Speakers: Carl-Erik Isacson, Maria Hamberg, and Dechor Hien, Communist League candidates for Parliament. Sun., May 1, 6 p.m. Vikingagatan 10 (T-bana St Eriksplan). Tel: (08) 31 69 33.

# New Zealand: disaster for working people

Continued from Page 9

Labour policy before the central party leadership broke with that perspective in the 1980s.

The New Zealand First party has also gained a wide hearing. Winston Peters, a capitalist politician who left the National Party in 1993, heads this organization that won two parliamentary seats in the last election. Peters demagogically focuses his fire on "big business" and the banks. He lambasts business and government corruption and scandal, speaking as a champion of "shared sacrifice" and of broad New Zealand and Maori business development. He points to the "quislings" who have sold state assets to "the boardrooms of Chicago, New York, Tokyo, and Europe."

An impressive-looking economic recovery has resolved nothing in the longer term, in a depression-ridden world. Douglas Myers, chairperson of the Business Roundtable, representing the biggest corporations, warns of the danger of an economic "rewind,"

which could "snatch defeat from the jaws of victory." Myers urges the government to establish an economy without any tariffs and to abandon "unemployment benefits of unlimited duration."

New Zealand capitalists face a constant struggle to find and expand markets for their products. The single most important of these is processed lamb and beef. New Zealand is the world's largest exporter of lamb and mutton, and among the largest exporters of wool, dairy products, and beef.

## Workers not defeated

Along with the decline in livestock numbers over the past decade, jobs in meat processing have been cut by one-third and 17 processing plants have closed. Despite this downsizing, the industry still faces substantial overcapacity.

Financial commentators in newspapers around the world often point to events in New Zealand over the past 10 years as an example of the course that governments

elsewhere must follow in order to push back the working class and begin to chart a road out of the capitalist crisis. Despite the blows working people have sustained, however, the labor movement in New Zealand has not been crushed. Resistance to the employers' offensive has continued. Recent strikes have included paper workers, steelworkers, fishery workers, courier van drivers, food workers, textile workers, nurses, telephone operators, and seafarers. Many of these fights show an emerging mood of resistance among workers. Several have arisen directly in the local plants, when workers have refused to agree to cuts in wages and changes in work rules, or have resisted employer attempts to remove union coverage.

The current economic upturn is bringing new layers of young workers into the plants, particularly in manufacturing and food processing. This new generation can breathe new life into the struggles that break out as the capitalists relentlessly tighten the screws.

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**Capitalism at its finest** — There are now 50 companies trading in "death futures." Through these com-



Harry Ring

panies, investors obtain life insurance on terminally ill AIDS patients. They give the patient some part of the value of the insurance and when they die, pocket the balance.

**Scum of the week** — Warren Chisum, a gay-bashing member of

the Texas legislature, holds insurance policies on six people with AIDS. "My gamble," he said, "is that it will make not less than 17 percent and sometimes considerably better." He added, "If they die in one month, you know, they do really good."

**The justice society** — William Beals, a white cop from Oregon, Ohio, near Toledo, was convicted of shooting a six-year-old Black child in the knee. Beals said his gun fired accidentally while he was scolding two children for throwing stones in his swimming pool. The judge accepted a negligent assault plea. Beals faces a max of 60 days and a \$500 fine.

**The civilized system** — Mark Sandground, a Virginia lawyer, is looking for a cable outlet to air a \$9.95 pay-per-view "execution of the month."

**Depends on which side of the gap you're on** — Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan is upbeat about the economy but, he says, polls indicate this isn't a widely shared view. "There seemingly inexplicably remains an extraordinarily deep-rooted foreboding," he said. "Half those polled expect the next generation will face lower living standards." He attributed this to the income gap between rich and poor.

**Squeezers, Inc.** — According to

*Forbes* magazine, 785 top U.S. companies increased their sales less than 4 percent last year, but their profits rose nearly 14 percent. Meanwhile, they trimmed more than 200,000 employees from their payrolls.

**"I'll get back to you."** — Motorola and Paging Network plan to market a combination pager and answering machine. You call the number of the person you want paged and leave a message on the answering machine. The message is relayed to a paging terminal and then, by satellite, to the person being paged.

**Improved quality of life** — Courtney Ross, widow of the late

Time-Warner honcho, Steve Ross, is getting her pets off the canned and dried food regime. A special chef has been hired to turn out mushroom risotto and other goodies for her dogs, ponies, goat, burro and llama.

**March of technology** — At night, you load two eggs, two slices of bread, and coffee into the Breakfast Express and set the timer. In the a.m., the eggs get cracked and drop into a preheated skillet, the bread toasts, and the coffee brews. True, it's sunny-side-up only for the eggs, the toaster can't handle bagels or big muffins, and the machine is a mess to clean. But these are minor flaws considering that it's only \$400.

## Iowa working farmers oppose contract hog farming

BY SHIRLEY PEÑA AND NORTON SANDLER

DES MOINES, Iowa — More than 100 farmers and their supporters protested at the capital building here April 11 as the legislature discussed contract hog farming. The proposal under debate would allow county supervisors to use zoning laws to regulate corporate and contract farms that raise more than 625,000 pounds of pork annually, or about 5,000 market hogs, on sites of 160 acres or less. These local government officials would then have the authority to issue permits and decide where the sprawling factory-like farms would be located.

Board members of the Iowa Pork Producers Association, other capitalist farmers, and big business are opposed to the regulation proposal, which was presented in the state legislature as an amendment to the agricultural and natural resources budget bill. Many working farmers came to the capitol to lobby for the proposal. The regulation amendment was originally approved. But then a majority of legislators rejected the entire agriculture budget bill, leaving the issues in dispute.

### Expanding contract farming

The packinghouse bosses, agribusiness giants, and the banks are trying to find a way to maintain laws that prohibit zoning codes from being used against corporate and contract farms in Iowa. The state's corporate farm laws prohibit packing companies from owning livestock. But these corporations are expanding contract farming.

If passed, the law would be in effect for 12 months until the governor's Livestock Task Force issues a report on contract hog farms. The task force includes politicians and representatives of the Brenton Bank, the Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, the Agriculture Department of Iowa State University, various grower's associations, as well as a few working farmers.

This issue has come to the fore as an increasing number of contract and corporate farms have opened in Iowa, Missouri, North Carolina, Kansas, and other states in recent years.

"About 16 percent of the 95 million hogs slaughtered last year," stated an article in the March 28 *Wall Street Journal*, "were controlled by corporations either grown by them directly or raised by farmers working under contract for what amounts to roughly \$6 an hour. Some economists predict that within 10 years, companies will control between one-third and a majority of the nation's pigs."

"Something is stirring in the Iowa countryside, something big," said an editorial in the April 3 *Des Moines Register*. "It's the arrival of large-scale, factory-style production of hogs..."

"Much of the alarm is over what the trend might do to family farming," the *Register* continued. "The people who work in the big, scientifically controlled hog facilities are mostly paid employees of corporations, not independent farmers. The factory-style operations can produce huge quantities of animals of uniform size and type, which is what modern packing plants want."

### Opposition grows

Opposition to contract farms in Iowa has become increasingly visible as recent public meetings have drawn hundreds of farmers to discuss the issue. Verle Lenz, a retired farmer, explained that currently more than

100 contract hog facilities exist in Iowa. Farmers anticipate an additional 60 contract farms beginning operations in central Iowa by September.

Iowa's total hog population as of March was 14 million head. Virtually all will be sold to the large packinghouses like IBP, Monfort or John Morrell.

Sales of hogs to packinghouses enables working farmers to secure needed cash to finance the planting of crops, expand their farming operations, and provide for their families. With the current prices for soybeans and corn depressed, more and more small Iowa farmers are depending on raising animals to remain on the land.

The packing bosses would like to bypass the small farmers who bring to market hogs of varying sizes and fat content. Large confinement operations use factory techniques to genetically engineer and systematically control the weight and leanness of the hog. This insures the packinghouse a more profitable product.

The March 28 *Journal* article entitled "Power Pork" suggested that a factory farm hog can yield about 3,000 pounds of lean pork a year and that "a megafarm can easily make a hog for 10 percent less than the typical family farm."

Many of the recent farmers' meetings in Iowa have been called by the Organization for the Protection of the Environment. Arden Tweeten, the group's president, said that farmers are "trying to buy some time until we can look the whole thing over."

### Stench that billows for miles

Currently pork producers lack the technology to safely and efficiently dispose of hog waste. A large size hog operation is equivalent to a medium size city in the amount of excrement that must be disposed. This has meant that large containment facilities build concrete-lined "lagoons" to store the hog waste in. The waste can seep into the ground, sometimes several hundred feet, contaminating the water table — which in Iowa is the only source of drinking water.

Of concern to the rural population is the stench from the waste lagoons, which can be smelled from miles away. Also important is the issue of cleanup and disposal of waste materials should a large confinement operation shut down. Concern has also been voiced over the health of those workers at large farm operations who are exposed to the hazardous gasses and dust found in large containment buildings.

### Agribusinesses broker contracts

Farmers cited agribusiness giants — DeCoster, Murphy Farms, Farmland Cop and Iowa Select — as the main forces behind contract hog farming here. Under terms of contract farming, farms are liable for loans necessary to begin the operation, as well as finances relating to the land maintenance, labor costs, and utilities. These agribusiness concerns, which then deal with the packing bosses, supply the hogs, feed, and a nominal amount of veterinary services. They will allow for a small percentage of hog deaths — but if the number of deaths exceeds the contract percentage, the farmer assumes the losses.

The farmer remains under contract until the agreed upon number of hogs is delivered. Regardless of the grade of the hog



Militant/Ruth Nebbia

Working farmers protest corporate hog farming at Iowa state capitol April 11

taken to market the farmer will only receive a pre-arranged price.

Several farmers at the capital protest said in interviews that the packinghouse bosses' version of "restructuring" began with the offensive against wages and working conditions of workers in the early and mid-1980s. The current push to root contract hog farming in Iowa is designed to drive down pork prices. As farmer Wally Kraimeyer said, the packinghouse owners want to turn hog pro-

ducers into "a hired man on your own land."

Dennis Jones of Mason City explained, "They are trying to push the little guy out. They want the farmer to work for the packers."

Shirley Peña is a member of United Auto Workers Local 997 in Newton, Iowa. Norton Sandler is a member of International Association of Machinists Local 254 in Des Moines.

## — 25 AND 50 YEARS AGO —



In the face of growing public disillusionment with the Paris "peace talks" and a resurgence of active American opposition to the war in Vietnam, the Nixon administration is seeking to dilute and disorient antiwar sentiment by a new, fictional "peace offensive."

During the last two weeks of March, a myriad of rumors about secret talks between the U.S. and Soviet Union, the South Vietnamese National Liberation Front, and the Democratic Republic of Vietnam began to circulate. These rumors were apparently based on leaks from official U.S. sources in Paris and Washington, and on April 3 Secretary of Defense Melvin R. Laird stated in a television interview that "there has been some sign of progress in some of the private talks."

At about the same time, the president of the Saigon puppet regime, Nguyen Van Thieu, clearly acting under heavy U.S. pressure, began to talk about his government's willingness to enter into direct negotiations with the NLF and to offer members of the liberation front a legal status in the country's political life — under certain conditions.

The conditions were preposterous: The NLF — under a different name — would be recognized as an opposition party after it laid down its arms and North Vietnam

forces were withdrawn and before U.S. forces were taken out. In other words, the NLF has been offered Thieu's promise of legal recognition in return for militarily handing over its members to the tender mercies of the Saigon dictatorship and its U.S. masters.



April 29, 1944

MINNEAPOLIS, Minn. — The shotgun marriage between the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party and the languishing Minnesota Democratic Party was finally consummated at an amalgamation convention of the MFLP held April 14-16 in Minneapolis.

Its own leaders, a clique of Stalinists and CIO lackeys of Roosevelt, put the gun to the head of the MFLP. They steered and coerced the tottering wreck of what remains of the MFLP into a vote to fuse with the Democrats under the hybrid name of Democratic-Farmer-Labor-Party.

In this ignominious fashion, the independent farmer-labor political movement, which at times has made not only state but national political history since 1919, was forced into a union with the capitalist political machinery it was founded to oppose and wipe out.

The official political committee of the Minneapolis Central Labor Union, which represents a large part of the organized workers in Minnesota, had expressed itself as opposed to the fusion.



## Turn out the vote for the ANC!

The large democratic-minded majority in South Africa will drive the final nail into the coffin of white-minority rule April 26-28 in the first nonracial election in the country's history. In the days leading up to this historic moment, the revolutionary movement led by the African National Congress is clearly gaining momentum.

The capitulation of Inkatha Freedom Party leader Mangosuthu Buthelezi, who agreed to participate just one week before the elections, is a victory. It affirms the correctness of the ANC's course of isolating and dividing opponents of the democratic revolution through a campaign of political explanation and mass mobilizations.

Buthelezi and the KwaZulu Bantustan he governs are creations of apartheid, propped up financially and militarily for years by the racist regime in Pretoria. Faced with the prospect of losing his lifeline in a real election, the Inkatha leader threatened an election boycott and whipped up a campaign of violence in a desperate bid to sabotage the vote.

This attempt was defeated by working people in Natal province and throughout South Africa, who demanded the right to participate in the elections. One hundred thousand responded to the ANC's call and demonstrated in Durban March 25 to oppose the Inkatha campaign to disrupt the election. This rally followed uprisings in Bophuthatswana and Ciskei that ousted the rulers of those apartheid Bantustans.

In accepting Inkatha's 11th-hour decision to run in the elections, the ANC did not give one inch of ground to the right wing. Buthelezi acted from a position of weakness,

realizing no boycott or physical assaults by his supporters could turn back the course of the democratic revolution. The authority of Nelson Mandela and the ANC has been strengthened in the process.

As Mandela and other ANC leaders have stated, however, now is not the time for complacency. The ruling National Party is hypocritically trying to present itself as the force that destroyed apartheid, playing up exactly those racial prejudices and fears that were cultivated by decades of apartheid rule.

Supporters of the democratic revolution around the world should join the ANC in answering the National Party's lies. The decades-long struggle by millions of toilers in South Africa is what has finally brought apartheid rule to its death, a fact Mandela pointed to on national television in his debate with South African president F.W. de Klerk.

Every vote is important in this historic election. A decisive ANC victory at the polls will put the workers and those who seek to work the land in the strongest position to take on the enormous challenges in constructing a truly nonracial, nonsexist, democratic society. The best answer to de Klerk, Buthelezi, and all the other forces opposed to the revolutionary advances in South Africa is to mobilize an overwhelming turnout in support of the democratic movement.

South Africans will begin going to the polls around the world April 26. Workers, farmers, and supporters of the democratic revolution internationally can help make a final campaign push to explain the stakes in this election and turn out the vote for the ANC.

## U.S. out of Iraq now!

The recent downing of two U.S. helicopters by the Pentagon's own fighter jets in northern Iraq, killing all 26 people aboard, shines a spotlight on Washington's ongoing war against the Iraqi people.

The fact that the helicopters belonged to the United States, and were part of the U.S.-led United Nations operation against Iraq, has made it more difficult for Washington to hide what really happened. The U.S. pilots, assuming that the helicopters were from Iraq, didn't bother to check with air traffic control, didn't bother to establish contact, and didn't bother to warn those inside. They simply blew them up. They had clear instructions from the military brass to function exactly this way. Initial news reports then tried to blame Baghdad for the disaster. They had to sheepishly retract this lie within hours.

Defense Department spokespeople claim this fiasco was an accident. They attempt to blame modern technology which, they say, doesn't give pilots enough time to think. Or, conversely, they claim important equipment that could have identified the chopper as "friendly" was not being used. But the downing of the two helicopters was not a mere accident. It was the result of more than three years of U.S.-led aggression against Iraq — including a devastating economic embargo, which has left hundreds of thousands dead. With true imperial arrogance, Washington, along with London and Paris, has even forbidden the Iraqi government to fly planes over its own territory — and then used this no-fly zone as an excuse to shoot down Iraqi planes and bomb Iraqi positions.

This is the real history of what U.S. president Bill Clinton calls his "mission of mercy," which has nothing to do with protecting Kurds from the repressive regime in Baghdad.

In spite of great harm done to working people there, however, Washington's policy toward Iraq has been a total fiasco for the U.S. rulers. More than three years after the Gulf War, they have failed to achieve most of their goals. Clinton, like former-president George Bush before him, has not succeeded in establishing a regime in Baghdad that is more subservient to the interests of Uncle Sam, than Saddam Hussein. The entire Middle Eastern region has become more, not less, unstable. The infamous U.S.-led international coalition that carried out the slaughter of tens of thousands of fleeing Iraqis on the road to Basra in 1991 will never come together again. Interimperialist rivalry has flourished since the Persian Gulf War.

A debate in the United Nations just weeks before the two U.S. helicopters were downed by "friendly fire" has made this point clearer. While Madeline Albright, the U.S. representative, pushed for a harsh statement against Baghdad, her counterparts from France, Russia, and China, looking after their own economic interests, wanted to ease off. In the aftermath of the helicopter disaster, the *New York Times* editors urged Washington to "reconsider" its policy toward Iraq.

The *Times*'s hesitations notwithstanding, working people and youth should tell the truth about Washington's crimes in Iraq and demand: Terminate the no-fly zones! End the embargo now! U.S. hands off Iraq!

## Lift embargo of Macedonia

The Greek government's imposition of a trade blockade of the neighboring republic of Macedonia is a virtual act of war. Working people in the Balkans and around the world should demand that the embargo be lifted and reject the nationalist campaign by the Greek rulers against recognition of the former Yugoslav republic.

"Macedonia has been Greek for 3,000 years," shout many at sizable demonstrations, sponsored by Athens, from Thessaloniki to Melbourne and New York. The absurdity of this slogan becomes apparent when one considers that during this time-span millions of people of different nationalities, speaking a spectrum of languages, and living under various social systems, have inhabited the area comprising what is today the republic of Macedonia and northern Greece. It also has the same reactionary political content as "America First" or "France for the French," slogans advanced by capitalist politicians of various stripes in other imperialist countries.

Following the overturn of capitalist rule in Yugoslavia through a popular revolution in the mid-1940s, working people in the republic of Macedonia fought to end discrimination along lines of nationality. But national oppression of Macedonians who remained in Greece, some 2 percent of the population in the country's northern province, has persisted for decades.

It was the example of the Yugoslav revolution, which united workers and farmers of different nationalities, that the Greek bourgeoisie and other capitalist classes in the region feared. As can be seen more clearly in the case of southern Albania today, the Greek rulers maintain their imperialist visions of expansion in the Balkan region.

Their nationalist campaigns, whether for maintaining the "Greekness" of Macedonia or "North Ipiros," lead to attacks on immigrants and democratic rights for all. The thuggish assaults against Albanian immigrants in Greece or Macedonian churches, businesses, and homes in Australia are only the latest examples. Furthermore, the anti-Macedonian onslaught can only widen the war now raging in Bosnia, the first in Europe in nearly half a century.

Washington has increased the number of its troops in Macedonia to more than 500. Like forces of other imperialist powers elsewhere in the former Yugoslavia, U.S. soldiers are not there to safeguard the rights of Macedonia's working people. The U.S. rulers are intervening in the region to assert their own economic, political, and strategic military interests. They couldn't care less about past or present oppression of Macedonians or Albanian immigrants. The consistent and callous disregard for tens of thousands of refugees fleeing the Bosnian slaughter by Washington, Paris, London, and Athens demolishes the humanitarian facade of these imperialist regimes.

What is needed to advance working-class interests is a fight aimed at uniting workers in different parts of Yugoslavia, Greece, Bulgaria, and throughout the region. A necessary part of this fight for unity is the struggle against the oppression of any nationality, including the suppression of languages, culture, or religions.

Working people should reject attempts by Athens to designate inhabitants of the former Yugoslav republic "Slav Macedonians." And above all, the labor movement should demand: End the blockade of Macedonia now! U.S. troops out of Macedonia!

## Collazo and Flores: decades fighting for Puerto Rico's independence

BY RON RICHARDS

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico — Oscar Collazo and Irvin Flores, two outstanding fighters for Puerto Rican independence for more than 40 years, died here recently. Both were longtime militants in the Nationalist Party. Both survived more than a quarter century in U.S. jails, remaining unbroken fighters to the end.

Collazo died February 20 at the age of 80. Flores died March 19; he was 69.

In October 1950 the Nationalist Party led by Pedro Albizu Campos organized an insurrection against a half century of colonial domination of Puerto Rico by the United States. In coordination with an armed uprising on the island, Collazo and Griselio Torresola attacked Blair House, President Harry Truman's residence. Torresola and a guard were killed in the attack. Collazo, seriously injured, was sentenced to the electric chair. International pressure forced Truman to commute Collazo's sentence to life in prison.

In 1954 a squad of Nationalists commanded by Lolita Lebrón and including Flores, Rafael Cancel Miranda, and Andrés Figueroa Cordero opened fire from the visitors gallery of the United States Congress. Five people, including Congressmen, were wounded.

By the 1970s Collazo had become the longest held political prisoner in the Americas. A campaign began in Puerto Rico to demand that the U.S. government free the five Nationalist prisoners. It received support both internationally and within the United States. In 1979 President Jimmy Carter pardoned the five Puerto Rican fighters. Large crowds at the airport gave them a hero's welcome when they returned to Puerto Rico.

Figueroa was released in 1977, before the others, because he had terminal cancer. He died in 1979.

Collazo was of the generation that became politically active during the social and economic crisis of the 1930s. By the age of 18 he was attending mass demonstrations of the Nationalist Party and soon became a member.

In 1937 the police opened fire on a Nationalist demonstration in Ponce, killing 20. Albizu Campos was arrested, convicted, and sent to prison for 10 years on charges of trying to overthrow the U.S. government. Other Nationalists were either jailed or killed.

### Uprising against colonialism

With the end of World War II in 1945 the imperialist rulers were confronted with a massive worldwide uprising against colonialism. In response, Washington decided to modify its colonial rule in Puerto Rico. In 1948, Muñoz Marín became the first elected governor of Puerto Rico. He cracked down against the Nationalist Party, which responded with preparations for an uprising.

On Oct. 26, 1950, the Nationalists took up arms and attacked police and government facilities in various cities throughout the island. The town of Jayuya was liberated and held for a short period.

Muñoz Marín crushed the revolt with Puerto Rican police and National Guard units. Several thousand people were arrested, solely because they supported the Nationalist Party.

Throughout his life Collazo was a teacher. Working in a factory in New York after World War II, he gave English lessons to his Puerto Rican coworkers during lunch breaks. In prison he taught fellow inmates to read and write. He also worked as a translator for a newspaper in Puerto Rico.

"Although physically he is dead," said his fellow fighter Cancel Miranda, "men like him never die because they have become a symbol and symbols do not die. The important ideas stay alive. I do not cry for his death because I celebrate his life, a life lived confidently in his beliefs."

The Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party issued a statement on the death of Collazo. "The people of Cuba," it reads in part, "and our party will always remember Collazo as a brave fighter and one who continued the thoughts and actions of Pedro Albizu Campos. To the end of his life he loved and defended a just cause and gave an impeccable example to his people of dignity and patriotism."

Flores, who joined the Nationalist Party in 1945, worked in a garment factory in Puerto Rico. He was elected union president in the shop and helped lead a six-month strike there. When Flores refused to register for the draft in the imperialist U.S. Army, the FBI went to the factory and threatened to prosecute him.

In 1950 Flores joined the pro-independence insurrection, for which he was briefly incarcerated. After his release, he moved to New York, working at a furniture factory on Long Island. The FBI caught up with him and had him fired. He then met up with Cancel Miranda and helped lead the Nationalist fight in New York.

In 1954, together with his four comrades, he took part in the attack on the U.S. Congress. He was sentenced to 81 years in federal prison. After his release in 1979, Flores remained active in defending current Puerto Rican political prisoners.

Reflecting the deep respect Flores and his comrades won among working people in Puerto Rico and elsewhere, the New York Spanish-language daily *El Diario/La Prensa* stated in an editorial, "We recognize the integrity and honesty of those who, like Irving Flores Rodríguez, risked everything for the cause of Puerto Rico's independence and paid a very high price for their loyalty to that ideal."



# Flight attendants at American win jobs back

This column is devoted to reporting the resistance by working people to the employers' assault on their living standard, working conditions, and unions.

We invite you to contribute short items to this column as a way for other fighting workers around the world to read about and learn from these important struggles. Jot down a few lines about what is happening in your union, at your workplace or other workplaces in your area, including interesting political discussions.

Nine members of the Association of Professional Flight Attendants (APFA) who work at the airport in

## Coal miners in Kentucky demand union recognition

Coal miners at the Pontiki mine in Lovely, Kentucky, voted 101-78 for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) in an election held in August. The successful union organizing drive took place during the seven-month-long national coal strike last year. But MAPCO, the owner of the Pontiki mine, is contesting the results. The National Labor Relations Board hasn't ruled on the company's challenge.

"Management wants everyone to give up on the union. But we're not going to do that. We're not giving up," explained Sam Bradley, recording secretary of UMWA Local 9313.

their jobs March 25 when the Fortex Company announced that its two South Island meat-processing plants were being closed and put up for sale. A few days later, a small North Island venison plant owned by Fortex was also closed.

Receivers appointed by the company's debtors explained that the decision to close Fortex was taken because its NZ\$150 million (NZ\$1=US\$0.56) debt was "unacceptable in relation to its size."

Farmers who supplied Fortex with lambs for slaughter in the weeks before its gates closed have been told that they are unsecured creditors and are unlikely to be paid for their stock. The total owed to farmers stands at NZ\$7.5 million, with some individual farmers facing losses of up to NZ\$100,000.

Fortex had long been hailed as an innovator pointing the way forward for the meat-processing industry in New Zealand as a whole. This industry accounts for 20 percent of the country's export earnings.

Above all, the company broke new ground for New Zealand meat industry capitalists. By establishing longer workdays, six-day workweeks, and abolishing overtime pay and shift allowances, Fortex increased productivity 16 percent.

In the wake of the closure, it emerged that not all the money deducted from workers' wages for superannuation [retirement fund], medical insurance, and union fees had been paid over to the appropriate funds.

Like farmers, Fortex workers now become the company's unsecured creditors and are unlikely to receive any redundancy [severance] pay.

The collapse of Fortex opens up a new round of restructuring in the meat export industry. Minister of Agriculture John Falloon rejected



Flight attendants picket in San Juan, Puerto Rico, before November strike.

Militant/Janet Post

## ON THE PICKET LINE

San Juan, Puerto Rico, won their jobs back when an arbitrator ruled in their favor. The workers were fired by American Airlines after their strike in November 1993. All were active participants in the walk-out and were accused of picket line violence.

The flight attendants only found out after they had been fired that they were accused of rocking a taxi cab that was taking a strike-breaker across the picket line. The workers dispute the company claim. They pointed out that despite a massive police presence on the line, no cop report was ever filed.

"The arbitrator did not believe their story," Pete Rivera, the chairperson of the San Juan chapter of APFA said.

With this victory under their belt, members of APFA are supporting other labor fights on the island. The flight attendants' union will be sending some of its members to an April 16 AFL-CIO-sponsored rally in Mayaguez to support workers on strike at the Hilton Hotel there. Hilton management is demanding a cut in pay, claiming it is necessary if its operation is to remain competitive with nonunion hotels in the area. □

At the end of February, Larry Jude was killed in a mine accident when a shuttle car ran over him. Jude, 33, had been a miner for nine years. When federal inspectors from the Mine Health and Safety Administration (MSHA) came to Pontiki to investigate, the UMWA safety committee chairman and another miner requested that the UMWA be part of the investigation. MSHA initially agreed but the company refused to allow UMWA officials onto company property and succeeded in getting a judge to rule the miners' petition invalid. At the beginning of April, 16 miners submitted a new petition.

"By law we're entitled to a miner's representative when MSHA comes to inspect the mine," Bradley said. "This pertains to mines whether they are union or non-union. People don't have to take the company's word. They are artists at covering up violations when inspections take place. The company is using threatening tactics to dissuade men from thinking about the union and keep support down." □

## New Zealand meatpacker closes, lays off hundreds

Up to 1,800 meatpackers lost

calls for a bailout of Fortex, saying the government wanted to encourage "sensible" downsizing efforts in the meat industry.

It is likely that either the Primary Producers Cooperative Society (PPCS) or the Alliance group — two of Fortex's competitors — will buy the South Island plants. If so, these new owners will probably close one or more of their existing factories.

The meat companies are also pressing ahead with plans to cut jobs and wages. PPCS is seeking to impose wage and job cuts at its CFM mutton plant near Christchurch that will cut NZ\$1.2 million off its wages bill.

Workers at Waitane Meats in Gore, which PPCS recently bought, have had their employment contracts canceled as of April 6. □

## Gov't workers in Canada vote to authorize strike

Members of the two largest unions organizing public-sector workers in Canada's Newfound-

land province have given approval for a strike if the government doesn't back down from its concession demands. The Newfoundland Association of Public Employees and the Canadian Union of Public Employees organize 19,000 workers in the province.

The proposed concessions include a wage freeze and benefit cuts, which a union memo says would be "the most severe and unreasonable in the history of our unions."

The workers are particularly angered by the concession demands since they had no say in the recently approved provincial budget, which cut \$50 million from their pay and benefits. □

The following people contributed to this week's column: Ron Richards from San Juan, Puerto Rico; Bernie Senter, member of the Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers union in Morgantown, West Virginia; and Joan Shields, member of the Meat Workers Union in Christchurch, New Zealand.

## LETTERS

### Wants to meet socialists

I am a sophomore in high school, and I have been a Marxist for three years now. Initially, I was too concerned with reading books from the vast collection of socialist literature to care about meeting others who shared my views, and I was horribly ignorant of current events in the socialist movement, as my only news source was television news programs. However, my isolation did not prevent me from expressing my views. In fact, once, when I was in eighth grade, I had made preparations to distribute socialist literature, that I had written, at a school function; unfortunately, the principal canceled my plans.

About a year ago I got a subscription to the *China Daily*, an English-language newspaper. Although it was heavily censored by the Chinese government, it occasionally had articles about revolutionary struggles in other parts of the world. But these articles were few in number, and had no political commentary, which prevented me from seeing what other people thought of these battles, or did about them.

One day, in a bookstore, I came upon *New Internationalist* no. 7, concerning the Gulf War, and for the first time I heard an opinion on the war that was not for it. I also saw an advertisement for the *Militant*, and I began to subscribe. This news-weekly was everything I needed: information about current events and the socialist movement's reaction to



them. I want to let you know how much I appreciate the *Militant*.

Recently, I heard about the socialist educational conference in Chicago, and I wanted to go there very much, but unfortunately I was not able to. I have yet to meet other socialists, and I have many ideas I would like to discuss with other people. I would like to know more about the Socialist Workers Party and the Young Socialist Alliance, and since I do not know where else to write about this, I am writing to you at the *Militant*. I would greatly appreciate it if you would send or write me more information about this matter,

or direct me to another place that could. Thank you very much.

A.W.  
Evansville, Indiana

[Editor's reply: Readers who are interested can contact the Socialist Youth Organizing Committee at Box 113, 561 Hudson St., New York, NY 10014.]

### Protests in China

In your April 11 article on China you refer to "Beijing's military crackdown on student protesters at Tiananmen Square." That might be

a little similar to calling the anti-Stalinist revolutions in eastern Europe student protests. I remember reading *The Nation* at the time — and probably also the *Militant* — which noted that most of those killed were not students, but workers and city residents fighting the military that was trying to take over Beijing.

Student protesters sparked the movement, but once the democracy movement spread to the common people at large in Beijing and other cities the Stalinist government saw the need to urgently and ruthlessly crush it. The Western or bourgeois press naturally portrayed the democracy movement as a student one, in order to conceal from workers here the role fellow working people played there.

Students were the spark, but the movement soon was turning into a working class movement. As I recall, the working people of Beijing blocked the army two times from entering Beijing before they themselves were finally crushed.

Stan Smith  
Chicago, Illinois

### Navajo land fight

The March 28 issue of the *Militant* carried a letter by Hally DeCarion which documented the forced relocation of Navajo people and continuing harassment of those who remain on ancestral land. It is clear from what DeCarion says that this serves the interests of big business,

in this case Peabody Coal Co. which wants to strip-mine in the area.

DeCarion states, "The area . . . is home to thousands of Navajo shepherders, weavers, and silversmiths. For many generations, traditional Navajos have existed in peace, separate from the money economy and modern technological culture." This raises the question: Is it progressive that a people is separate from, outside of, the economic life of a country?

The liberation of women as a sex is advanced by our being part of the economic, social, and political life of the working class. Is this true for indigenous people and oppressed nationalities? (I hope no-one will think I equate being driven off the land with leaving the kitchen and nursery.)

If freedom for workers, working farmers, and oppressed peoples around the world can be won only by seeing ourselves as a class — recognizing our common enemy and our common interests — how can this happen for people who remain on the land of their ancestors, separate from others?

Kate Rodda  
Christchurch, New Zealand

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of general interest to our readers. Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.



## Young socialists win new recruits

### Organizing committee members join picket lines, build antiracist action

BY NAOMI CRAINE

"It's important as a young person and a unionist to solidarize with other workers," said Javier Aravena, explaining why he and other young socialists in the San Francisco Bay Area have been getting out to the picket lines set up by striking Teamsters.

Aravena, 25, is a rail worker and coordinator for the Socialist Youth Organizing Committee (SYOC) in the Bay Area. He said going to the picket lines is significant because it "involves young people in labor struggles." He and three other SYOC members had just visited strikers at Yellow Corp. in Martinez, California. "They said, 'We're doing this for you guys, the young part-time workers, so you'll have a future,'" Aravena said. "It makes me want to go back to my union local and talk about their fight."

The young socialist noted the importance of solidarity for the workers' fight, comparing the picket line at Martinez to one he had visited in Haywood, California, a week earlier. "The gate in Martinez is on a main road, and people driving by honk in support," he said. "Strikers there are in pretty good spirits. In Haywood the picket line is off to the side," so there's not as much visible solidarity.

SYOC members in New York, Minneapolis, and elsewhere have also made solidarity with the Teamsters strike one of their top priorities.

#### Reports from socialist conference

This is just one of the activities young socialists around the United States have jumped into since the beginning of April, when more than 80 signed up to build SYOC during a youth meeting at the Socialist Educational Conference in Chicago.

In a number of cities, the new members of SYOC have held public meetings to report back from the Chicago conference and win other young people to the organization.

In Salt Lake City, Utah, members of the Young Socialists of Utah who had been at the gathering gave a presentation hosted by the Militant Labor Forum April 9.

More than 30 people attended the forum, about half of them students and young workers. Two of the young socialists, Matt Stannard and Tami Peterson, spoke on the many issues raised at the conference — world capitalist politics of the '90s, the challenges of advancing socialism in Cuba today, the fight to defend and advance women's rights, the unfolding democratic revolution in South Africa, and how youth are reacting and organizing in order to bring about change for a just society.

Peterson, a 16-year-old high school stu-



Militant/Linda Joyce

Activists defend clinic in Birmingham, Alabama, against Operation Rescue, April 2. Many who joined socialist youth group at Atlanta conference helped defend clinic.

dent, spoke about the formation of SYOC. "This organization is of the same layer of revolutionary youth which in the past has included [Karl] Marx, [Frederick] Engels, and leaders of the Cuban revolution," she said, explaining that young people at the conference were "optimistic, conscious, and politically active."

A dinner before the forum and raffle afterward raised more than \$200 to help cover travel expenses for the trip to Chicago.

One of the main activities of the group in Utah now is building an April 28 rally sponsored by the Student Anti-Apartheid Coalition to support the democratic elections in South Africa.

Socialist youth in San Francisco held a similar forum the following week. Ruth Reitan, a SYOC member from Minnesota, described the activities going on in her area. Lisa Cohen from San Francisco invited people attending the forum to join SYOC and give money to help with the group's activities. Both speakers had attended the conference in Chicago and participated in the third U.S.-Cuba Friendship caravan.

Five people signed up to join the Socialist Youth Organizing Committee after the forum, and participants contributed more than \$300 to the group.

Nine activists from Alabama and Georgia signed up to be part of SYOC during an April 16-17 educational weekend in Atlanta. The events included a forum titled "Where racism and anti-Semitism come from: how to advance the fight for Black rights," a class on "The origins of women's oppression and the fight for equality today," and a discussion on building a nationwide socialist youth organization. SYOC steering committee member Damon Tinnon participated in these events, explaining what socialist youth in other areas are doing.

Most of the young people there had recently joined in defending abortion clinics against Operation Rescue in Birmingham, Alabama. They hailed from Atlanta, Birmingham, and Athens, Georgia.

More than 20 young people, most of them high school students, met in Cleveland the same weekend to hear an eyewitness report from South Africa by Brock Satter, another member of the SYOC steering committee, and to discuss other activities. Some of the participants had already joined SYOC, while others were still deciding whether they want to be part of a socialist youth organization. The group is planning to read and discuss *Socialism on Trial* by James P. Cannon and other titles to learn more about communism.

The students in Cleveland are planning a big participation in an April 23 countermobilization against the Ku Klux Klan in Lansing, Michigan, as are SYOC members in Minneapolis.

Unified Progressives as One, a coalition of political activists and organizations in the area, is planning the peaceful action to oppose an announced rally by the Klan that day.

The Michigan Young Socialists are actively building the antiracist action and will invite young participants to their second meeting, to be held following the rally. The meeting will feature discussion on revolutionary developments in South Africa and Cuba.

Naomi Craine is a member of the SYOC steering committee. Javier Aravena in San Francisco, James Gallanos and Tami Peterson in Salt Lake City, and Damon Tinnon in Minneapolis contributed to this article.

#### Join Socialist Youth Organizing Committee

To find more information or to join the Socialist Youth Organizing Committee write to:

Socialist Youth Organizing Committee  
Box 113, 561 Hudson Street  
New York, NY 10014

## Activists in Sweden defend women's right to abortion

BY ANITA ÖSTLING  
AND MARIA HAMBERG

STOCKHOLM, Sweden — Defenders of a woman's right to choose abortion are organizing a march on April 23 and a rally four days later. The April 23 event will coincide with a right-wing mobilization against abortion rights.

Abortions in Sweden are available on demand until the 18th week of pregnancy. Between the 12th and 18th week a minor consultation is required prior to the procedure. Ninety percent of all abortions in Sweden take place before the 12th week. After 18 weeks it is basically illegal.

The services are part of the general health care system and covered by sick leave payment. It is performed in all public hospitals; no separate abortion clinics exist.

Opposition to a woman's right to choose has existed ever since abortion was legalized in 1975. But it has become bolder during the past few years. Public polls put support for abortion rights at 80 percent of the population.

The main group organizing the antiabortion protest is a religious sect called "Word of Life." It has taken its opposition into the streets. For a number of years it has organized a national "Right to Life" march in Stockholm, busing people in from around the country. Between 6,000 to 8,000 individuals have participated in these actions over the last few years.

Two years ago around 150 people partic-

ipated in a pro-choice counter demonstration. Last year the abortion rights rally involved 400-500 people. This year the march is scheduled for April 23.

The Saturday prior to the "Right to Life" march, activists kicked off a ten-day campaign in defense of a woman's right to choose abortion with an outdoor meeting in the city center. Over the course of the following week daily outdoor meetings with bullhorns, flyers, sales of buttons, and discussions will take place.

On April 23, pro-choice activists will gather on Stockholm's south side, then march to the city center and spread out along the route of the right-wing demonstration. The aim is to mobilize for a pro-choice rally on April 27, featuring speakers who were part of the fight in the 1960s and '70s and new activists who are joining the protests now.

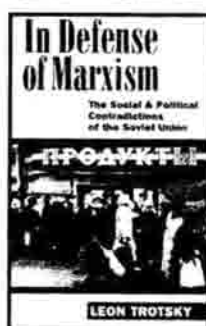
Opposition to abortion rights also comes from the Christian Democratic Party (KDS), one of the four parties in the present coalition government. But individual members of all these parties have proposed that Parliament make abortions illegal after the 12th week.

At the initiative of the KDS, the government has appointed an expert to present a proposal on whether medical students can omit certain parts of their education due to conscientious objections. The students who oppose abortion rights would then not have to learn how to perform those services when they become doctors.

FROM *Pathfinder*

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